++ WILLIAM STANTON ++

by W.T. KANE

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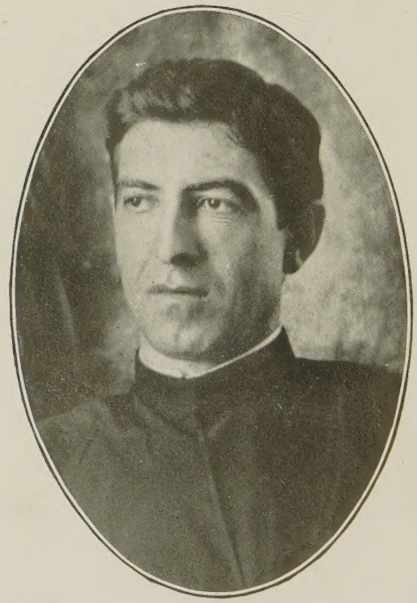

WILLIAM STANTON, IN 1900

WITHDRAWN
54-410

A MEMOIR OF WILLIAM A. STANTON, S.J.

BY
WILLIAM T. KANE, S.J.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
THE MOST REVEREND J. J. HARTY, D.D.
ARCHBISHOP OF OMAHA

B. HERDER BOOK CO.
17 SOUTH BROADWAY, ST. LOUIS, MO.
AND
68 GREAT RUSSELL ST. LONDON, W. C.
1918

St. Benedict School
BLUE ISLAND, ILL.

IMPRIMI POTEST

A. J. Burrowes, S.J.

Praep. Prov.

NIHIL OBSTAT

Sti. Ludovici, die 7. Jan. 1918

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Sti. Ludovici, die 12. Jan. 1918

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TO

MARY REGINA DIMICK

TO WHOM IN EVERY WAY
IT OWES MOST
THIS MEMOIR
IS AFFECTIONATELY
DEDICATED

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

When we take up a work of biography to read, we find, ordinarily, that it is the story of a man whose name at least we have known before. The title page is vaguely reminiscent. The man's name brings up sketchy memories. He figured largely in such and such a war; he wrote such and such books; he was a statesman of such and such a period of history, or a poet, or a notable rascal, or the brewer of a noble beer, or a successful usurer who held a high place in the councils of government; possibly (and most vaguely of all to us) he was a saint. But he comes before us in the book with some credentials of history, with a letter of introduction which he himself wrote upon the fading tablets of time. We set ourselves to read with a sense of being about to enlarge upon an acquaintance we have already made. We are keeping the convention of polite society in not venturing beyond the circle of the properly introduced.

Heaven defend us from decrying that convention, whether in life or in books. No doubt it serves a good purpose. But heaven defend us more stoutly still from becoming its bondmen. He has not savoured life fully who has never welcomed an unknown comrade in the way, who has never stepped out stride for stride with one whose sole known credentials were his sonship of Adam and the image of God in his soul. The high romance and sweeping adventure of life lies not alone on strange mountains or in uncharted seas; it is often upon the road before our doors; it is in the faces and hearts of unheralded pilgrims who meet up with us on our plodding way.

I remember a man once saying that he considered the most delightful avocation in the world to be that of an agent of Baedeker's. He grew quite rhapsodic about it: to wander about this good earth, ferreting out its beauties, noting places of interest, discovering hidden nooks and corners full of charm and nobility and restful hotels with French chefs, and bringing all these nice things to the notice of grateful travellers. I doubt if he knew much of what he was talking about: yet, let us grant, there may be something in his idea. But there is an incomparably finer search open to men. For just as

in the material world there are secret haunts of beauty and delight, so also in the world of men God makes fine fellows whom we must hunt out for ourselves, who sound no great trumpet in life, who will not catch our eye by any civic monument or gleaming halo when they are dead, nor have even the meagre credit of an *advocatus diaboli:* but whom it is a matter of pride for us to have known and loved.

Of the number of such was William Stanton, whom you, most amiable reader, in all likelihood never so much as heard of. But if you read this book bravely and persistently, despising all querulousness of the flesh, I promise you that you shall at least know something of him; and I hope that even under the poverty of my presentation you may catch some gleam of his fine gold.

Father Stanton was a young Jesuit priest. He died when he was only forty years old. He had done but ten or twelve years of actual work in his Jesuit career, and that for the most part away off in half-barbaric places where the spot-light does not reach. He would have been most hugely amused over the notion that any one should make a sort of hero of him: and he might have beaten me about the head with this book, had it come into his hands. Yet for all that, a heroic man he was, and rather

particularly (I like to believe) the kind of heroic man that our temper of to-day most delights in: a man who, with an easy grin and an utter lack of pose or self-consciousness, made enormous personal sacrifices and underwent constant hardships for a great cause; a great, generous man, with the heart of a boy, the physique of an athlete, the intellectual gifts of a real scientist, and the faith of a Breton peasant woman. He was the sort of man whose very existence makes us think better of humanity, makes us think better even of ourselves: for with all his fineness he was very close to the commonest of us.

It is in the certain confidence that many will be glad to know such a man, and in the hope that some will be encouraged to imitate him, that I have written this little book.

I wish to make grateful acknowledgment to the relatives and comrades of Fr. Stanton, who, often with considerable inconvenience to themselves, have generously supplied me with the material for this memoir.

INTRODUCTION

I had known the subject of this memoir from his boyhood. I had known well, back in St. Louis, the splendid Catholic families from which he sprung. When I came to Manila in 1904, I found Father Stanton already a figure of note in the island capital. He had the distinction of being the first American to be ordained a priest in the Philippines under the American régime. He had the more enviable distinction of holding the high regard and warm affection of all who knew him.

His position as the first American priest ordained in Manila gave him a really important influence. In the chaotic conditions resulting upon the changed relations of Church and State in the Islands, he was a visible link between the old and the new; between the spiritual existence that dated back to the coming of the Spaniards, three hundred and fifty years before, and the new civil rule of the Americans. And his beautiful gifts of character enabled him to use that influence for an immense good. His services,

at a time when the need of them was so great, were most valuable. His fine poise of character, his smiling, kindly common-sense, smoothed over many a difficulty, for his fellow-religious, for Spaniard and American and Filipino alike.

The Jesuit Observatory in Manila had been taken over by the new government, and its officials received salaries from the government. But the American voucher system puzzled the good Spanish padres, and gave them such scruples and fears of violating religious poverty that they were on the verge of relinquishing their fine work altogether. Stanton steadied them, and in his easy, drawling way made the situation at least clear enough to get them to sign the salary-vouchers and continue with their work.

He was welcomed by the American residents, whom he gathered with some others to form an English-speaking congregation at the church of La Ermita. The soldiers at the barracks idolized him. The Filipinos trusted and loved him. Demands were made upon him from every quarter, and to all he responded cheerfully, generously. He attended the stricken in the cholera hospitals, he rounded up the Catholic soldiers in the neighbouring pueblos, he preached to his Americans, soldiers and

civilians, instructed converts, looked after the sick and dying: and all this in addition to an abundance of hard work in the Observatory.

He became in time quite a famous man in Manila, even throughout the Islands. There was nothing at all spectacular in his methods or his achievements. The charm of the man was in his unselfish, devoted, priestly character. He spent himself for others. He won men by that which has ever won them, the priestly spirit of self-sacrifice. What he did was only the common duty that falls to the priest of God all the world over: his supreme distinction was that he did it most uncommonly well.

That this spirit ruled his whole life, this memoir of Father Stanton shows. I am glad to be able to introduce it to its readers. Father Stanton went through life swiftly, "a burning and a shining light"; and the gleam of him in his passing still lingers in many hearts. May God give us all to be more like him.

✠ J. J. Harty.

WILLIAM STANTON

CHAPTER I

The problem of every work of biography, even the most unpretentious, is to set the subject of it, the man himself, clearly before the reader. What the man said and did is really secondary: the chief thing is what he was. Even if the account of him be, in point of fact, largely a record of dates and events, it is because only through these externals can we lay hold upon the substance of him; it is because they interpret the man to us, give him to us in his setting and place. For the rest, it is a question of choice, guided by that main purpose and by the decent conventions of life, as to what facts and incidents shall be stressed, what touched upon lightly, what ignored completely.

I should like to begin this short memoir after a fashion dear to the heart of Stevenson — something like this: Stanton went over the side of the steamer and down the ladder, tossed his bags into the

open boat bobbing at the ladder's foot, and swung out, running before the trade, for the palm-fringed coast half a league to the west.

Thus we might leap plump into the middle of things, and follow the man swiftly into that field of action where he is most fully made manifest. But alas! in this sort of book the conventions must have their say. Let us walk measuredly, lest we offend. Of the south seas and of tropic lands, there shall be talk hereafter: meanwhile, let us prosily begin at the beginning. The reader, however, is fairly warned that these first chapters, written merely with conscience driving my pen, will be rather extraordinarily dull.

William Jerome Stanton, born of American parents, was remotely of Irish and French descent. His father's family hailed from Limerick, Ireland: his mother belonged to the old Creole family of the Chappes. His father was Thomas Stanton, an architect and builder, who was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1838, but came as a boy to St. Louis, Missouri. His mother was Regina Helen Brawner, of Florissant, Missouri. Miss Brawner's parents were dead when, in 1865, she married Thomas Stanton; hence the marriage took place at the home of her aunt, Mrs. Spalding, in the little town of Staun-

ton, Illinois, distant some forty miles from St. Louis. After the marriage the Stantons returned to St. Louis, to take up their residence there. But five years later, Mrs. Stanton, as the time drew near for the birth of her first child, went again to Staunton, where William was born, on February 28, 1870. The similarity between his family name and the name of his birth-place is, of course, a mere accidental coincidence. Two other children were afterwards born to the Stantons: Mary Regina, and John, both of whom survive their brother William.

There is scarcely need to say that the Stantons were Catholics, of old Catholic families. William's mother, in particular, was an exceptionally earnest Catholic, a woman of deep piety, of great generosity and sweetness of character. She was not of robust health, and much of the care and education of her children fell upon her husband's sister, Mrs. Joanna Siedekum. William's education, at home and at school, was careful and thoroughly Catholic. He was sent to school when he was a little over five years old; a preposterously tender age for the rigors of school life, some may think; but not uncommon amongst Catholics of a generation ago. Of that first school there is nothing to be said here, beyond the fact that it was attached to the Jesuit church in

St. Louis, that it was conducted by Miss Anna McCrea, and that the boy spent six years in it.

He had not been very vigorous in his early babyhood, but thereafter grew into a healthy, robust, lively youngster. He showed even in his years of childhood something of the combination, which so struck us who knew him in after life, of great physical and mental activity with a remarkable evenness and natural poise of manner. He was fond of games and excelled in them, and was decently obedient in all matters except that of swimming. St. Louis is built upon limestone, the great beds of rock being in many places practically on the surface: hence the city abounded in stone-quarries. These, when abandoned, promptly filled with water, and made excellent, though rather dangerous, swimming pools. Young Stanton early made their acquaintance, and the keenest memories of his school-mates are of his daring feats in the cold waters of the old quarries.

In 1881 he entered the Academy of St. Louis University, where his father before him had been a student. He was a good student, one of the leaders of his class, but not extraordinarily brilliant, About this time he became also an acolyte at the old Saint Francis Xavier Church, and continued to

serve Mass there during the whole of his college course. He was a thoroughly good boy: one of his friends from boyhood says, "as clean a boy as ever I knew." But he was by no means notably pious. He had that deep, unostentatious faith, which was his heritage of Catholic blood and training, which moves into and out of the supernatural atmosphere without any fuss or posings or violence or self-consciousness, which counts God in its life as naturally as a man takes the earth and sun and air. There was no need to preface this memoir with the disclaimer commanded by Pope Urban VIII, for I shall nowhere in it call Stanton a saint. If the reader do so when he finishes, that is his affair, not mine.

Whatever the custom be in other lands, the hall-mark of acceptance amongst American boys is to have been dubbed with a nick-name. Stanton, whether at his first school or at college, but at some early time in his boyhood, was deemed worthy by his fellows to be known as "Buck," and "Buck" Stanton he continued to be to his friends until he died. The name seems to smack of the dare-devil, perhaps of the swaggerer and blusterer. Well, swaggerer and blusterer Stanton was not; but of the dare-devil he had plenty in him. Under a quiet

exterior, adorned with the most companionable and dependable smile I have ever known, he had a cool and persistent pluck that would face anything; and he had a fund of animal spirits which led him into many a situation that required some facing. His pranks and escapades at college, though innocent enough, were sufficient in frequency and unexpectedness to ward off effectually from his teachers and prefects all danger of *ennui.*

A comrade of school-days tells of a typical incident. In the early part of March one year, he and Stanton sallied forth for a day in the woods west of the city. Their wanderings brought them to a small lake, still filmed with the frost of late winter. At the edge of the lake a small, rude raft was fastened. Of course they loosed the raft, and set out with a bit of board to paddle across the little lake. Some hundred yards out the unwieldy craft upended and pitched Stanton into the water, where he struck out, swimming and pushing the raft, till they reached the shore. The cold began to stiffen his clothes upon him, so they made a little fire and dried their clothes at it, whilst they went back into the water for a "real swim." Stanton was "laid up for repairs" for two weeks after.

His grit was of the dogged kind that can endure

as well as venture. The same comrade recalls how a bigger boy, in the bullying sort of play that some boys indulge in, once twisted and pummelled "Buck's" arm until he should cry quits. But there was no cry from Stanton; only the steady, undaunted grin with which a real boy masks the inner stubborn resolve.

These things are trifles, but they may show something of the quality of the boy.

A boy's idea of honor does not always square with his elders' notions. Many a live, normal boy practices at times what grown-ups may call wicked evasions, but which are to him the mere necessary defense of his liberties against an invading adult world. Chewing gum and smoking cigarettes were made taboo to young Stanton: a most iniquitous and tyrannical taboo as some boys may believe. Hence he was put to casting a handkerchief, veil fashion, over his head when he sat at his books at home, in order safely to masticate the delectable but forbidden gum. His aunt was violently shocked one day, when he was about sixteen years old, to discover him, as he went along with a group of college mates, smoking a horrid cigarette. When he got home, she questioned him, and he owned up frankly to the felony. (Lying, you see, *is* ruled out by the boys'

code.) And to her upbraiding, he answered with a twinkle, "Well, you said never to let you see me smoking. And I tried my best *not to let you see me!*"

Some folk would call that sort of boy dishonorable. Yet the chap who did this would not, on another occasion, report a boy who stole his theme and cheated him of a prize in school. That would be caddish in the boys' code. The other, according to them, was fair game. And who are we pitiful, blundering grown-ups to venture arbitrary rulings in the subtile realm of boyhood? We have lost the vision which is theirs, and would rashly judge where we cannot see. I am not defending his disobedience. I am but trying honestly to sketch his defects as well as his qualities. Even a crude portrait is not done all in white. Yet, defects and all, any boy who knew "Buck" Stanton well would have sworn to his absolute honesty and honorableness. Let us take their word for it: they know.

And in the boys' notion of honor, generosity has a big part. There are not merely certain things you must not do; there are also a host of things you must do; and many of these latter call for a deal of unselfishness and liberality. Stanton could pass that test too amongst his fellows: even, stranger still,

could pass it at home. Brother and sister knew him as one who delighted to give, who, beneath the noble sternness and proper dignity of a big brother, had a finely masked interest in their infantile concerns and a gruff large-handedness with even such treasures as lucky taws and iron-wood tops and rockaway skates.

The boy was affectionate and had the quick intuition of affection; but obviously, for a boy, that was a thing most especially to be disguised. What real boy but has a horror of being thought "soft"! The dear old Aunt Joanna, at eighty-three, says, "Willie is the one who understands me. I don't even have to speak to him: he knows." But "Willie" (who confided to the writer that one of the agonies of boyhood at home was to be called "Willie"; yet who signed himself so in his letters home to the end) would have been most horribly embarrassed to hear her say so.

It would not be quite correct to say that he was quick-tempered. His general air of cheerful poise and fun belies that. But his temper was fierce when aroused. He nearly killed a young scamp who threw a broken bottle and put out an eye of his dog, Felt. All through his life, one sensed in Stanton latent fires of wrath; which, on the rare occasions

when they came to the top, were decidedly volcanic.

It has been said of him that he was handsome. Well, tastes differ. I never thought him so; though something of the fineness of the man shone in his face and made him wonderfully winning. You have his portrait in this book, and can decide for yourself. It matters little either way. He certainly had a native ease and grace, and a perfect social tact, uncommonly notable in a boy. He was a good dancer. He was popular with girls of his acquaintance. But he had a boy's exalted scorn and fine condescension toward such matters. You would have tested his temper disastrously if you so much as hinted at classing him with the "sissies."

Of course there is a whole world more that might be written of Stanton's boyhood. Let these scrappy notes suffice. We have better things to tell of him. But if they have given you the notion that he was any singularly precocious or astounding sort of boy, they have been misleading. He was indeed a very fine and likable boy, but most healthily normal, with a good, wholesome share of boy faults. He lived in modest circumstances, but with a well-to-do bachelor uncle, John Stanton, handily in the offing, to pinch his ear and line his palm with most satisfactory frequency. He battered his homely way amongst his

fellows, esteemed with their rough esteem, tested and trained in the crude but efficient school of boy comradeship, unspoiled, unaffected, and — as they would sum it up —" a mighty decent fellow."

CHAPTER II

We come now to speak of Stanton's vocation to the Society of Jesus and of the beginnings of his life in that Society. His vocation is of a sort that is really astonishing, though by no means uncommon. The boy simply thought all along, from an early day which even he himself could not mark, that he was to be a Jesuit. If you had put him to it, with his back to the wall, he would have admitted it at any time from his thirteenth or fourteenth year. But he never said much about it. It was one of those fixed things, to be tucked away in a corner of the soul, sacred from prying eyes, not even to be much discussed or reflected on by its owner: but which you knew always was there, almost as a part of yourself.

That sort of vocation is, I say, astonishing. God's finger is most appreciably in it. It is an interior grace so strong and clear as to leave no room for doubts in the mind of him who has it. It seems due to no external circumstance, to owe little or nothing directly to suggestion or even to training.

It comes into the soul, one knows not just when, like a gentle breath of air, without violence, without noise, without apparent effort: and once in, it enters almost into the very substance of a man, and will urge him even when he kicks against the goad. Yet because of its nature we can say little of it beyond a brief chronicling of the fact, and the remark that, with all its awesome strangeness, it is wonderfully common as a type of vocation. Those who have experienced its like will recognize it even in these halting words: those who have not, might find it incomprehensible after a folio volume upon it.

Though there was little talk at home of Stanton's vocation, it was an accepted fact, and to the quiet, sweet-tempered mother a cause of private joy. Her health, for years frail, was failing more and more swiftly in the latter years of William's course at the University. But with the secret sacrifice which mothers know how to make, she concealed the fact as much as possible. She dreaded lest it might in some way be an obstacle to her boy's following of God's call. And when, on July 16, 1887, in his eighteenth year, he entered the Jesuit house of noviciate near Florissant, Missouri, she was ready to sing her *Nunc Dimittis*.

Becoming a Jesuit novice is a most unromantic

affair. A young man makes application, in a vague sort of way, to some one in authority at a Jesuit house, and is directed to the proper superior, who says, "We'll see." After a time, he is again directed to present himself to three or four grave and reverend fathers in turn, and answers questions which strike him at the time as a bit impertinent. He is rather impatient: the matter has all been settled between God and himself: what have these reverend busybodies to do with it? After another little time, he is told a day when he should go to the house of noviciate. He fetches a sigh, perhaps; packs his belongings, with a touch of reluctance, perhaps; and goes. That is all there is to it. Of course, the applicant might be astonished to know that his request has been very seriously and prudently weighed, and that the whole proceeding was by no means so cock-sure and simple as he had fancied. At any rate, there he is at last, a novice, and the life begins.

So much has been written of the Jesuit noviceship that nowadays all the world is acquainted with it. There is no need for us here to dwell minutely upon it. The noviceship has a two-fold purpose: to test the genuineness of vocation, and the quality of the novice to follow it: and to introduce the novice

to the religious life and begin to train him in its virtues. In practice the two purposes are secured mainly by the common life of the novices. There are "experiments," as every one knows, rather specially designed as tests: working in the kitchen and scullery, the month of retreat in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, teaching catechism to children. But the real test is the life itself: a humdrum, quiet, monotonous two years of prayer and instruction, of obedience in little things, of self-adaptation to one's fellows, of silence and reserve and quiet self-control, of striving to enter into what we may call God's point of view, of building up in one's self the supernatural structure of sacrifice. There are few, if any, thrills; plenty of grey days,— but rarely black ones. No detail of the life is really hard: it is the sum of it which tries a man's moral temper.

During the month of October, 1887, Stanton, with the other novices, went through the "long retreat," the full Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. They were to have, for him, a tragic close. A few days before the end, he was called home by the critical condition of his mother. He spent two or three hours with her, and had to hurry back to his retreat. Indeed, she urged him to return. Her work

was nearly over, she knew, but it was no part of her desire in laying it down that its early completing should interfere with her son's high calling. He went back to his noviceship; and on the last day of the Exercises, October 31, his mother died. He was not with her at the end, but came into the city the day following. She died holily, peacefully, rejoicing in the good gift that God had given her through her boy.

We have no record of Stanton's thoughts or feelings at this sad time; nor, indeed, have we any need of such. He was sorely stricken, no doubt, with that most sacred grief which it would be barbaric in us to unveil. The Florissant house of noviciate is only a scant twenty miles from St. Louis, so that his relatives could easily see him from time to time, and particularly during the first lonely days after his mother's death. Henceforth the good Aunt Joanna was to be a mother to the young Stantons.

There are a half-dozen or so letters to this aunt during the noviceship, saved from utter inanity only by the kindly and affectionate concern they show for all the little interests of his family. That is the only gleam of intelligence or interest in them. Mentally a novice's life is decidedly bare. His little

round of days, centered upon God and himself, furnishes the scantiest matter for external record in letters. Besides, the noviceship almost infallibly breeds aloofness; the novice has a great dread of distractions; he is in a state of moral violence, with all his energies taken up in an intense interior effort. If one adds to that the native reticence of northern blood and the moral bashfulness of one little more than a boy in years, one can readily understand how ill-equipped young Stanton was for self-expression.

Nor could even his fellow-novices tell much of him beyond comparatively insignificant external details; for the novice is no more communicative with his fellows, ordinarily, than with outsiders. Stanton went about his work with his usual easy poise of manner, but with an almost savage intensity within. Some little of that latter leaks out, accidentally, in the discovery of certain indiscreet austerities which he practised: with a good will and the rash earnestness of youth, going far beyond the small measure of corporal penance permitted the novices in general. A fellow-novice tells of Stanton's wearing the sharp-pointed iron girdle, common enough in use amongst religious communities, not for an hour or so in the early morning, but

continuously for days. And there are some kindred instances, which go to show the resolute earnestness with which he set about these beginnings of his life in the Society. But time and common sense gradually tempered this indiscretion of zeal, yet without diminishing the generous spirit which prompted it. Men wise in the spiritual life tell us insistently that the stability of the religious structure in after life depends singularly upon the foundation of whole-hearted devotedness to God laid in the noviceship. A man who does not make there *il gran rifiuto,* may possibly make it later: but the odds are against his doing so. We have no doubt of Stanton's prompt and complete self-sacrifice in the beginning, both from the little we know of his noviceship and from the wider knowledge of his succeeding years in the Society.

A trifling detail may be noted here: in his second year as a novice he began to use Aloysius as a second name, having probably assumed it when, at the close of the first year, he was allowed to pronounce the "vows of devotion." [1]

[1] These are the simple vows of the Society, perpetual, but admitted only as a private act, by permission of the provincial. They do not formally constitute the one who makes them a religious, as they are not accepted in that sense by the Society.

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On July 31, 1889, he completed his two years of noviceship, and pronounced his vows as a scholastic of the Society. He remained two years more in the house, as a "Junior," according to the custom in the Society, to review and further his knowledge of classical literature. In these years of study there is, of course, a trifle more latitude in the recreations allowed than in the noviceship; and in long tramps about the great valley lying in the angle of the Missouri and Mississippi rivers Stanton had opportunity to develope his interest in the phenomena of natural history and to exercise his exceptionally good powers of observation. He was soon a sort of local authority on the birds and snakes and plants of the district. We may say that here he put the foundation of the scientific habit which became so notable a part of his after life.

He was never a dry-as-dust scientist, a man wrapped up in the mere technicalities. His own superb vitality made *life,* in all its forms, the chief natural interest for him. If he became expert in the classification of animals and insects of all sorts, it was only because of his keen concern with the individuals of each class. There was never a man, I dare say, of his breadth and accuracy of scientific knowledge, who had about him less of the tradi-

tional formalism and provincialism of the scientist. His mind, with all its balance, was swift and imaginative; he combined the patient persistence of the plodder with the wide-eyed enthusiasm of the boy. Then too, he was a most companionable man, a good talker, an even better listener.

In these years, too, his character began to reassert itself, after the long negation of the noviceship. He bore then, as all his life, the definitive stamp of the religious: yet less and less as a mere type, and more as the very pronounced individual which he was. His quiet spirit of fun crept out to the surface again, together with that love of romance which kept him his heart of a boy till the end.

All his companions of the years at Florissant bear testimony to his likeableness. He was then, as always, very popular. But he was in no sense a leader amongst his fellows, he had little or no initiative. He had a baffling sort of reserve, not from timidity or mere self-consciousness: but in part the result of native indolence, in part the product of a young and raw asceticism. True, anything like devotional ostentation was utterly foreign to him; yet as a novice and junior scholastic it was noted of him that he spent all his spare time before the Blessed Sacrament. Explain it how one will,

notable piety, even amongst religious persons, usually bars its possessor from perfect comradeship with others. He was over-jealous of his own interior life and suspicious of all that might intrude upon it. "Secretum meum mihi" is an excellent counsel, yet not an easy one to be mastered gracefully by a young man scarcely out of his teens.

He excelled in sports and delighted in long tramps. But it was matter of common observation that during these Florissant years he never once attempted to organize a party for games or an outing. If only some one else made the arrangements, he gladly formed one of the party, a most welcome comrade and a stalwart performer. His strength and endurance were exceptional. A traditional walk was to the junction of the Missouri and Mississippi rivers, distant some eighteen miles from the house of noviciate. During one vacation, when Stanton and three others made this tramp, they lost their way and walked some forty-five miles in all before they reached their goal and returned home. For provision they had with them only a bottle of wine and some biscuits. Three of the walkers were out of commission for days after, but Stanton apparently suffered no inconvenience at all.

He was outwardly phlegmatic; the common

opinion said he "had no nerves." In reality the man was most keenly sensitive and delicately organized. A crude practical ghost-joke, which did not affect its other victims beyond the immediate moment, left Stanton, to the astonishment of all, broken and sleepless for nearly a week.

Some of his early teachers in the Society thought him lazy and prodded him, perhaps more vigorously than kindly. It was characteristic of Stanton that none of his comrades of the time suspected that he felt this very much; characteristic too, that the prodding was for the most part quite ineffectual. When Stanton moved, the motive force must come from the inside; and he had his own views about duty.

One particular instance is recalled, out of the ordinary. Stanton's turn came to practice public speaking before the other novices. He blundered through a few sentences in a listless fashion, and with apparent unconcern; much as a school-boy might go through the same horrible bore. The Father in charge of the class brought him up roundly, and sent him to his seat with a good stinging rebuke. At the next class Stanton was made to try again, and positively astonished his companions by his vigor and dash of thought, speech, and man-

ner. He *could* be waked up; but his tendency was to slip back immediately into his old lackadaisical ways. Later in life, when he had found himself, he became a very interesting and forceful speaker.

The summer of 1891 found him in St. Louis, to begin his three years' course in philosophy and the natural sciences. The metaphysics of the schools had little attraction for Stanton. He worked at his task conscientiously, and passed all his examinations with success. But beyond that he did not go. Physics and chemistry were a trifle more to his taste, yet not even in them did he find his *métier*. The man was tremendously alive, and it was life which drew him: in ever ascending scale, as his career shows, from mere vivid curiosity about plants and insects up to that incomprehensible fulness of life which is the crown of God's work in His creatures — of which Christ said, "I am come that they may have life, and may have it more abundantly." But as yet, Stanton had not surely found himself; he was still in the vague. The three years went by in quiet routine, and he marched with his fellows.

Vacations were passed at a villa four hundred miles to the northeast, up in Wisconsin: six or seven weeks each summer. The villa was on an

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island in one of a chain of lakes, with wooded hills all about. It was a delightful place for all, for none more than for Stanton. He was a man of the open, vigorous, athletic, well set-up, extraordinarily lithe and muscular. His summers were times of immense interest and activity, when in field and wood and water he made himself at home, observing, playing, studying, all at once. He began collecting — all sorts of things: butterflies, snakes, moles, turtles, and "such small deer." His skill in swimming became really astonishing, and remained a tradition of glory for the men who followed him. All competition, in his time and later, was tested by the "records" of Stanton, and was unanimously found wanting.

These were years of quiet growth, uneventful, even, serene. He did nothing to mark him out amongst his comrades, yet even then the man carried an aura about him, of native charm and (though perhaps no one defined it) of both native and supernatural nobility. He was one of those men who do not need to do anything to signalize themselves: what they are is amply sufficient. There was no lack of men with him who surpassed him in brilliancy, whose accomplishments were more apt to make a stir in their small world, and who were ener-

getic and insistent where Stanton was unobtrusive and self-effacing. But it was Stanton who thrust up above the level, quite unconscious of his little eminence. And it was this unconsciousness, too, which did much to endear him to his comrades.

At twenty-four, then, we have him, a tall, well set-up man, reserved but not remote, quiet, slow of manner, drawling of speech, but with a quick eye and a vague impression about him of latent activity that seemed yet to lack the nameless something which should call it forth; brave in an enduring, negative way; stubborn and strong, but not aggressive; intellectually mediocre, except where his interest was aroused, as it was in the field of natural history; a man to pass unnoticed in the crowd, were it not that the crowd loved him and somehow pointed him out.

CHAPTER III

Pascal says that a man does not come to the age of reason until he is twenty-one years old. The saying is not all paradox. In reality, twenty-one years are hardly enough. How many hard knocks it takes to develop that beginning of wisdom which alone can rightly be called the age of reason! How many mistakes one must make, and learn to profit by! Perhaps twenty-five or thirty might be nearer the age of reason. In this matter the Society of Jesus prefers not to take chances. It wants to turn out a dependable type of workman and it is willing to go slowly, to spend time on the job. For the Jesuit the age of reason, as a rule, dates only from his thirty-fifth year.

Up to that time he is ordinarily in real tutelage, he is considered by the Society as immature, as an intellectual and moral minor. The Society believes that he can grow mentally and in character even after his arteries have begun to harden. His days pass in placid monotony, in a prescribed routine, with his planning done for him by another, and his energies directed by another.

If you know the outward history of one of the Jesuit scholastics, you know the outward history of practically all of them. The real events of his life are interior, of the mind and heart: just as are the real events of a child's life. He is making astounding discoveries in himself: viewing, with the thrill of a first explorer, truths which he recognizes, a few years later, amongst the commonplaces of human knowledge. His "peaks in Darien" are mostly gravel-heaps along the beaten track of humanity. He is forever starting deer that turn to hares, and setting his soul exultingly upon new paths — which he finds, to his chagrin, lined with the comfortable villas of the dead. Ordinarily he is afflicted by spiritual growing pains, and at times is cast down in spirit by what, for the moment, he calls the fetters of his tutelage. He kicks against the goad, as every child does, and dreams large achievements for his majority, and, it may be, is inwardly supercilious toward what his forbears have done. But his dreams grow cold, and their diminished glory fades as his years go on. He acquires a new gesture, the shrug of his shoulders: and a new habit, of looking before he leaps.

He is steadying himself, getting balance, perspective, prudence. It is all so sensible, so practical.

But it is not quite perfect — what human process is? Much is being gained, but something is being lost. Your Jesuit is getting circumspection, but he is losing fire. He is growing disillusionized, but he is losing the pulse of romance. He may make fewer mistakes, but will he be so generous in spending himself? Ah, that is the melancholy part of this coming to the use of reason.

Now and then one comes through the ordeal, rational indeed, yet not wholly spoiled of the spirit of his boyhood: keeping the vision: for whom the glory has not departed. You can mark the trail of such a man across the world, for it gleams. Of this sort was Stanton, though few might suspect it at the time. His dreams were of imperishable stuff, and the years only ripened him for their fulfilment. He had the patience to wait for that fulfilment, even though he had no notion of what it might be. He had hidden within him the wholesome potency of ambition, but none of the fever of ambition. He was content in a perfectly sure hope that what work God had for him to do would be put to his hand in good time. He took up each task that was given him, without questioning, without doubt. He had a remarkably constant and simple sense of God's

guiding providence, and an unblustering, quiet confidence.

When his three years of philosophy were completed, he entered upon another stage in his growth, in the course of which his more immediate vocation was to come to him. In the autumn of 1894, he was sent to St. Ignatius College, Chicago, to begin the period of teaching which ordinarily intervenes between the philosophical and theological studies of a Jesuit scholastic. It was his beginning of active work for others, humdrum and prosaic enough, as any one knows who has borne the burden of the class-room. He taught English and mathematics in the last year of the high school.

Stanton was not a brilliant teacher, nor was he an aggressive personality. There was nothing special about him that shone, nothing you could put your finger on as making him stand out amongst the half-dozen scholastics engaged in the same work at the college. He was not thrown much with the boys outside his class, and he spent only one year in the college. Yet he is one of the best remembered of his generation. Every boy in the college during his time seemed to know him, and every one who knew him liked him. His dark complexion

and long eyes won him the name of "Jap" amongst the boys, a sobriquet that had in it nothing of disrespect, but was a token rather of regard, of admission into the freemasonry of boyhood. With all his quiet smiling reserve, his easy and unassumed dignity of manner, the boys felt he was one of them. The man had a charm about him that was indefinable but compelling. Perhaps no boy in the college could have given you a reason for taking to Stanton. He came amongst them as a stranger. It was not his prowess as an athlete that won him their admiration, for they knew nothing of that; nor was it his immense store of practical knowledge concerning birds and beasts, for he had no occasion to display it before the boys. It was nothing adventitious, but the man himself, that made him a sort of personage and got him friends wherever his smile introduced him.

Now he was beginning to find himself, to see what he could do, to discover real openings for his activities, and to measure up to the actualities of his dreams. But it was only the beginning, as yet. He did not dislike teaching and he did his work as a teacher passably well. He had a great deal of quiet influence over boys. He won confidence almost without effort. He was sympathetic without being

demonstrative, and unusually patient, tolerant, and sane. He was not a martinet. Order in his class was kept fairly well, but by no means primly. His own easy, drawling way and his persistent good-nature made it impossible for him to be a severe task-master. Of course the boys "got ahead of him" from time to time. But every teacher who is not a born fool expects that; and Stanton, I need scarcely say, was not a born fool. Conducting a class is not a Theocritan idyll — *pace* some books on pedagogy: it is more often than not a contest of wits between teacher and pupils. And a good teacher must also be a "good sport," and take his misplays with a grin. Stanton's misplays were not many, and he learned quickly enough how to recover from them. I am not going into details about his methods. It is barely possible that some boys may wade this far through these pages; and I cannot take chances on showing a teacher's hand and giving the game away. Enough to say that his methods, whilst very smooth and simple, were reasonably successful.

I know that he would have been quite content to spend all his life in the class-room. He was not one of those who fancy that any shortcoming in their work is due only to external circumstances, those

restless folk forever chafing under the present task and striving to convince themselves and others that "somewhere else"— anywhere else, as a rule — they would meet with the success that they have not now. Stanton knew quite well that a man with the one ambition of helping others can find his field of activity wherever he finds human beings. It is also true, of course, that certain gifts and temperaments demand particular external adjuncts and surroundings in order to reach their full development and use. It cannot be denied that circumstance too is a factor in a man's efficiency. But it is only a secondary factor. The essential things are ability and energy, eagerness to do, devotedness, and unselfishness of purpose. No ordinary adversity or uncongeniality of surroundings can frustrate these. When, in after years, Stanton offered himself for other work than that of teaching, it was by no means in the spirit of running away from a disagreeable task: rather, we shall see, in deliberate choice of work which most men might naturally shun. But he was by no means a "born teacher." He had little or no driving power, could not energize his boys, nor overcome that monumental inertia of boy-nature which is the real burden and cross of the teacher. He was much more interested in his

" bugs," and his room was as filled with beetles and moths and snakes as ever it had been in St. Louis.

The scholastic year beginning in the autumn of 1895 found him in Detroit, whither he had been sent as lecturer in physics and geology. The new work was what many might consider of a more intellectual kind than that of the preceding year. But it was no promotion. The Jesuits, as a rule, do not deal much in that sort of thing. The provincial simply needed a man to teach some branches of physical science in Detroit, and reached out after Stanton for the work. He taught one year in Detroit, and had spent a few months of a second year there, when, in the middle of November, 1896, he was called away by his provincial to be sent to a new field, the lately opened college in British Honduras, Central America. It was in that colony that Stanton was to find his real life-work.

The mission of the Society of Jesus in British Honduras dates from 1851, when two English Jesuits from the mission of Jamaica came to Belize, the capital and largest town of British Honduras. They found only a few thousand Catholics in the entire colony, most of them refugees from Yucatan during the Indian uprising of 1847–8. The colony, lying just below Yucatan, on the shore of the

Caribbean Sea, is quite small, in area about the same as the State of New Jersey, some eight thousand square miles. Its entire population at that time could not have been much more than twenty thousand.

The new mission was reckoned as part of the Vicariate Apostolic of Jamaica, In time it grew, more Catholics came in from the unsettled neighboring republics. In 1888 British Honduras was made a Prefecture Apostolic, with Very Reverend Salvatore di Pietro, a Sicilian Jesuit, as first Prefect Apostolic. The title indicates a simple priest, not a bishop, but with the power to administer confirmation. Five years later, in 1893, Father di Pietro was appointed Vicar Apostolic for British Honduras, and consecrated Titular Bishop of Eurea. In the same year the English Province of the Society of Jesus turned over the mission to the Missouri Province, although a number of the English fathers, including the superior, Father Hopkins, remained to work in the mission.

In 1887 a Select School had been opened in Belize by Father Cassian Gillett, S.J., and nine years later, in 1896, this school became the present St. John's College. It was to this college Stanton was sent, in November, 1896, as its first scholastic

teacher. Another scholastic joined him in the spring of the following year. These two with the director of the college, Reverend W. Wallace, S.J., formed the entire teaching staff, and had in charge some seventy-five boys. We may close this chapter with some extracts from a letter of Stanton to a fellow-scholastic in the States, giving his own first impressions of his new home.

He had gone by rail from St. Louis to New Orleans, and there taken steamer. Belize lay four days to the south, across the Gulf of Mexico, into the Caribbean — and then, as it has been said, the first turn to the right. There was the usual cosmopolitan lot of passengers aboard, adventurers for health or fortune or thrills, contract laborers, embryonic revolutionists, mahogany cutters. After four days of heartless tossing in the little tramp steamer, the voyage came to an end.

"About 4 A. M.," he writes, "we anchored in quiet water, outside the reefs at English Caye, twelve miles from Belize, Looking out of my cabin porthole into the darkness I saw a faint glimmer on the horizon — the Belize harbor light — and heaved a deep sigh of relief. My interior qualms had subsided. I shaved, took a light breakfast — my first meal since leaving the Mississippi — and hastened

on deck. As day broke we steamed slowly through the tortuous channel between the charming islands which skirt the coast all along the colony. These islands are all of coral formation, and are covered with a vivid green mantle of mangrove and graceful coconut palms. The sun was just rising above the sea in a gorgeous mass of clouds. . . . It took at least an hour and a half before we finally arrived in port, and during this time the clouds had gathered into dense cumbrous masses and treated us to a few brief but very heavy showers of rain.

"On inquiring of my simple Belize fellow passenger concerning the rainy and dry seasons in the colony, I received the rather unexpected answer: 'Young man, I've been engaged in the mahogany business up in the bush near Orange Walk for well nigh eleven years, and, sir, I came to the conclusion that in Honduras there ain't no rainy and dry seasons; there's only a rainy season and a damn rainy season.'

"I began to think I had struck the d —— rainy season, for on the day of my arrival we had, by actual count, five downpours whilst coming into port, and sixteen more before I had fallen asleep that night. And these rains are none of your St. Louis drizzles, but real pitchfork pours; whilst between

the acts the sun seems hot enough to broil a beefsteak in ten minutes' time. The second day it rained only twelve times. I got tired counting after that. They tell me I have just happened to strike the tail end of the rainy season.

"But to return; as soon as we anchored we were surrounded by a fleet of small sailboats manned by crews of variegated colors — all colors, in fact, except white. I examined them from the deck to see if I could find any long-tailed black coats amongst the throng; but not finding any such sign of the brethren, I hired a passage in the nearest boat and we were off for the shore a mile or so away.

"Arriving at the wharf, the other passengers in the boat soon scattered in various directions, and I found myself alone. I caught up my bag and made for the nearest street of the town. I had gone but a few steps when I descried a big umbrella and a long-tailed black coat beneath, just turning a corner, and a minute later made out the broad, beaming face of Father L—— beneath the umbrella. Three minutes later we arrived at the residence; and here I am.

"Now what about Belize itself, the people, the college, the boys, my impressions, etc.?

"First of all, everything in Belize is in every

way new and quite different from what we are accustomed to in our northern climes. The town, viewed from the harbor with the morning sun shining against it, is really charming. It seems to rise from the sea as by enchantment, with its rows of clean white houses gleaming amongst the coconut palms and mango trees in which they lie half buried. They stretch a mile and a half or two miles along the shore, terminated by the Governor's house at the south end and the barracks at the north, with the Belize River half way between. The spires of several churches stand boldly up against the green foliage of the virgin forest beyond, whilst the neat brick convent of the Sisters of Mercy on a point of land thrust out into the sea rises high above its neighbours out of a mass of coconut palms: from the harbor it is the most conspicuous building in sight.

"There are probably not more than a dozen brick houses in the whole city, beyond the convent, our own church, and three Protestant churches. The dwellings and shops are all of wood, many of them built on stilts to avoid the dampness, for the whole town and surrounding country is very low and swampy. Belize, in fact, was built originally in a swamp occupying both sides of the mouth of the

Belize River, the advantage of the position being the deep harbor outside the bar, which facilitates the shipping of logwood and mahogany, the chief products of the country. The ground is all made ground, composed in great part of old ballast, mahogany chips, coconut husks, tin cans, old stoves, broken bottles, and such like valuable material.

"Our streets — there are no sidewalks — are not, of course, asphalted boulevards, but made of broken coral and clean white sea sand. This makes fine walks in fair weather, though during the rainy season and at high tides some parts are several inches below sea level. We have no screeching trolley cars or dazzling electric lights; but it may astonish you to learn that bicycles are quite common. The graceful coconut, the flamboyant tamarind, the lime, almond, banana, orange, and bread fruit trees are seen on all sides. The coconut and mango are to be found in nearly every back yard.

"During the first week the thermometer never showed lower than 84° F. in our study hall, though I looked at it every night before going to the dormitory at 8:30 P. M. They tell me this is the coolest season of the year. I hope I'll enjoy the summer when it comes. At present I am covered with prickly heat, but I suppose it will have worn itself

out before the warm season. The day before yesterday, however, a cold wave struck the colony, and the boys were shivering and wrapping themselves in blankets and hiding their ears in the turned up collars of their heaviest coats. It made me laugh. The thermometer actually dropped to 69° F. The extreme low temperature of Belize during the last eleven years has been 65°. So the last few days must seem to the natives extraordinarily cold.

" The inhabitants of Belize form a really remarkable conglomeration. Since my arrival I have met probably a dozen or fifteen really white men, including our own Fathers and His Excellency the Governor, Sir Alfred Moloney. Moreover, you can form no idea whatever of the race or color of a man from his written name. Wonderful surprises await you when you meet the individuals bearing such names as O'Neil, Kelly, Bennett, Marchand, Dunn, LaCroix, and the like. Instead of an honest Hibernian face and a charming brogue, you will find in all probability a dusky son of Afric's sultry clime and listen to a strange West Indian creole dialect.

" The population of Belize is given as seven thousand; whites 282; that is, European whites, for the Spanish American element is not reckoned in this

estimate. The rest of the population comprises blacks, Caribs, Yucatecans, Moika and Mongo Indians, Chinese, East Indian coolies; but above all and especially Creoles — which word has here an entirely different meaning from what it has in the States. A Belize Creole is a mixture of any degree of *black* and *white* born in the colony. The city is essentially Creole, though the colony is not. It is a rather ticklish business to enquire about the ancestry, or even the immediate parents, of Belize people. The blood relationships existing are generally quite astonishing to new comers from colder climes.

"As regards the college itself and the boys, I must say that I was most agreeably surprised to find how much had been done in the brief space of a few months by the energetic labors of Father Wallace in building up the college as it is. Everything about the college and surroundings is very neat and clean. The building is a new, plain, two-storey frame structure, with many doors and windows on all sides. On the ground floor are two large class rooms, music room, boys' refectory, store rooms, and the office of the prefect of studies. Above are another class room, library, study hall, and two small private rooms. One of these last is occupied

by Father Wallace; the other is mine — or rather, I keep my trunk there, but I live with the boarders in the dormitory, play ground, and class room. The rest of the community live in the adjoining residence. Throughout the house and college nearly all the rooms are separated from each other merely by high wooden partitions rising some eight feet from the floor. This is to allow of perfect ventilation and the admittance of all the sea breeze possible.

"We have at present sixteen boarders and about sixty day scholars, distributed among two preparatory classes and the First Form. Remember, the college has not yet completed one year of its existence.

"Just imagine me as I am at this moment, 7:30 A. M., seated in our neat, airy, little study hall, doors and windows wide open, the slanting beams of the morning sun, reflected from the verandah outside, bathing the whole room in a mellow amber light and bringing out vividly the variegated faces of my youthful charges. The thermometer at my side marks just 86°, whilst a balmy sea breeze plays delightfully through the room. The huge fronds of a coconut palm just outside the window rattle cheerfully against the eave. But just look at the faces before me: five pure whites, two chalk-eyed

grinning negroes (Creoles), an untamable wee bit of a Maya Indian endeavouring vainly to sit still on a civilized chair, two half Spaniards and Indians from the north, a couple of Guatemaltecan Spaniards almost as black as negroes but of refined Caucasian features, and the rest curious mixtures of white, black, Indian, and I know not what — such are my little boarders. . . . As you may well imagine, my boys are somewhat different in character too from the American small boy. I am beginning to know them now, as I am with them all day and all night, weekdays, Sundays, Emberdays, and every other kind of days.

"You will want to know how I like the place. On this point I can say with all earnestness that I have never felt better, happier, more contented in my life. Though this contentment, I assure you, does not come from the perfect satisfaction of all natural inclinations. . . . But aside from the spiritual aspect of the case, a fellow could really get heaps of fun out of innumerable things here, if only he had some one to laugh with him. I am sure I could name a dozen of the scholastic brethren who would enjoy Belize immensely. But for their own sakes and the sakes of others, let no chronic grumblers turn their eyes toward Belize. . . . It strikes

me that men with a large stock of patience, and who moreover have an eye for the ridiculous and a reasonable store of good humor, would do very well."

CHAPTER IV

The letter from which we have just quoted is particularly significant in that it is the first of Stanton's letters with the note of enthusiasm. It is not ebullient; but the drawl is gone. He was waking up. And it was a strange thing that woke him up (and quite characteristic that there is scarcely a hint of this strange thing in his letter); he was roused by a striking chance for self-sacrifice. It is not telling secrets to say that, especially in those early days, the possibility of being sent to Belize was, for most of the scholastics of his province, a very disagreeable possibility: for some, a positive horror.[1] Now, there is a smug sort of man, with an "I thank Thee, Lord . . ." attitude, who might like to march in ostentatiously where common mortals shrink and hold back. No need to say there was none of that spirit in Stanton. Cant and phar-

[1] Which, however, (in mere fairness it must be added), did not clash with the entire readiness of their wills to accept that destination once it were commanded them. It is, needless to remark, such combination of difficulty and generosity which makes up heroism.

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isaism were absolutely foreign to his nature. Indeed, the most certain thing about him was that, even when he did unusual things, he was not conscious of their unusualness.

He was told to go to Belize, and he went: most serenely, good-humouredly: not at all heroically, as one going into exile. But underneath his matter-of-fact appearance there was a little honest, boyish thrill. There was a touch of adventure, of romance, about the order, that made it naturally appeal to him. There was a possibility of discomfort, and a call for endurance; and he welcomed them. These two elements go a long way toward giving you the real Stanton.

His work in Belize was essentially the same as that of a teaching scholastic in any of the colleges of the Society; only the conditions under which he worked were different. He taught a class about equivalent to the first year of high school in the States. His boys were of all sorts, as may be seen from his letter, but by no means unintelligent. I believe he taught them better than he had taught his former pupils; and he certainly made them his friends. But withal, teaching was not his *forte* nor ever to become so. He did not shirk his task, but the task was not of the sort to stir his enthusiasm.

It is significant that when he had to get up the first printed prospectus and catalogue of the college, he did most of its composition with a scissors.

During his three years in Belize he had charge of the school discipline, kept order in the playground, presided at games, took the boys on walks, and the like. He organized the first gymkhana, or field-day of sports, in the college, and made it an annual affair. The prizes for it have ever since been contributed by the merchants of the city. As part of that surpassing loyalty to all things British which distinguishes the colonial from the home member of the Empire, Belize goes in heart and soul for cricket. Stanton made certain foolish efforts to oust cricket for base-ball, but of course without success. It is easier to change the Government of a people than their games; perhaps the former change is the less important.

Bathing in the shark-infested Caribbean is not quite so simple a matter as in other waters. Along the Caribbean one does not plunge in cheerfully anywhere: at least, not if one is prudent. The ordinary method of bathing demands an enclosure of stout timbers driven securely into the sand along the beach, to keep out sharks, saw-fish, sting-rays, sea-nettles, and such unwelcome visitors. An en-

closure of this sort, usually rather small (say, some fifteen or twenty feet by thirty or forty feet), is locally known as a "kraal." There was a public kraal just north of the city, considerably larger than the ordinary, in which the boys bathed. To this day, long after the old kraal has been broken up by the sea, Stanton's "old boys" talk with admiration of his swimming and diving there. Back of the beach was a superb stretch of level sward, the city common, the scene of cricket matches, football, polo, horse-racing, the play-ground of rich and poor, black and white, the most democratic spot in a most democratic city.

All this part of his work was, of course, much more interesting than his actual teaching. He never quite ceased to be a boy himself, so he had no difficulty in identifying himself with his boys' concerns. He had had some training in military drill and the manual of arms, and he was able, as a result, to help his boys make an excellent showing in the local celebration of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee.[1] They were admittedly, and very proudly,

[1] Eloquent of the colony's isolation is the fact that it celebrated the "crownation" of Edward VII some two months before it actually took place. The coronation was delayed owing to Edward's illness; but Belize, having no communication with the outer world save by steamer, was blissfully ignorant of the postponement.

quite the best element in the Belize parade.

When the day's work and play was done, Stanton shared the sleeping quarters of his dusky charges. Every day was a busy day for him, and his one respite, his one bit of time for himself, came in the dormitory after the boys had gone to bed, about nine o'clock. Then he had a couple of hours in which to study, write letters, arrange his collections in botany and entomology, before turning in himself for a rather well-earned rest. It was not much time, and he was a slow worker (it sometimes took him the better part of an hour to write a single page in a letter); yet it is astonishing how much he accomplished by his persistent toil, constantly adding to his store of scientific knowledge, and remembering excellently all that he laboriously learned. Some of the smaller boys wondered if he slept at all, for he was always up and at work when they fell asleep at night, and up and about before they woke in the morning.

Once he roused them all in rather a startling way. He had been cleaning a borrowed Winchester rifle: the usual story: did not know it was loaded: snapped the hammer by chance on the heavy cartridge, and blew a great hole in the roof. Yet he was deft and skillful with his fingers (although he

was left-handed), and clever enough with tools and weapons — except when "he got thinking," as he used to say; and he was as practical-minded as an Indian, until something so won his attention as to leave him oblivious of all things else.

The great interest of his Belize days was his collecting. He had a wonderfully keen eye for specimens. He might lose his knife or his stick on a walk, but he most certainly would not overpass anything of scientific interest or value. Every tramp with the boys was a search for "bugs" and snakes and plants and shells, for birds, beasts, reptiles, for all that made up the rich nature-life of the tropical country. His craze infected the boys until they were all on the lookout to get him things. Their interest seemed never to die down during the three years he was in Belize.

And what collectors they were! — "Stanton's bush-boys," as he called them. Most of them were half-wild little Indians (a narrow board-walk put down in the college yard positively thrilled them: they studied it half hours at a time, and for a week were chary of venturing on it), but the tropic woods were their home. They could pick out macaws in the topmost branches of trees, and point him out snakes — tommy-goffs, young wowlahs, corals — in

never so dense a tangle of " bush." They kept him abundantly supplied with beetles, scorpions, centipedes, spiders, moths, and butterflies. He taught them what to look for and how to capture insects and the like, and they brought them in. Then Stanton painstakingly read up on his treasures, usually in the dormitory watch, identified them and classified them so far as he could.

Sometimes his collectors brought in strange trove. One little Creole marched proudly in one day with a live snake in his hand, gripping it behind the head whilst the body, as long as himself, writhed and squirmed about him. Stanton at the first glance took it quietly from the boy and smashed its head with a lump of coral. That kind, he told the collector, must be brought in only when dead: it was one of the most poisonous snakes in the colony.

About a year after his coming he began to send duplicate sets of shells, corals, sea-urchins, crustaceans, and the like, to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington. Many of these were sent to be identified, as he was unable to identify them himself. On one occasion he forwarded quite a collection of sea-shells which had been given him by the girls attending the Convent Academy in Belize. The Smithsonian confessed itself puzzled by the

character of the shells, and asked for more information as to their natural habitat. Nothing quite like them, it said, was known along the Caribbean. Stanton made inquiries and succeeded in finding that their local habitat had been a load of ballast brought over in a ship from South Africa!

He was building up a museum in the college, one that became in after years a very fine collection — and later, as is so often the way, fell to pieces through neglect. In those early days the whole house was cluttered with specimens, some neatly bottled and labelled, some very much alive. The Father Superior was driven from his room by ants one night, and stumbled, half asleep, to borrow Stanton's room for the night, whilst the latter slept in the dormitory with the boys. But he did not sleep in Stanton's room that night. When he opened the door to enter it, a dozen huge live crabs, in a hungry mood, rushed for him across the floor. He said they sounded for the moment like cavalry. Another reverend Superior, on occasion, left his room rather abruptly when he discovered, on arising, that there was a small live alligator under his bed. Stanton pooh-poohed his excitement — "Why, the little cuss is only about four feet long! He wouldn't hurt any one." The community liked

Stanton immensely, but some of them were a bit uncordial toward his pets. "Love me, love my dog," they might accept: but they drew the line decidedly on live snakes and alligators.

There are no end of stories about these early collecting days: of Stanton in his white topi, or sun-helmet, laughingly walking home some eight miles through the bush with a live porcupine in a sack, the "porky" sticking quills into his legs all the way; of a twelve-foot shark caught at the market wharf, carted over to the college, and buried back of a lumber-shed at dead of night, to have the ants clean the skeleton for the museum; of — but we shan't have time for them.

Snakes were his specialty. Almost every walk brought him home with a few dead ones (he was a very sure shot), and now and then he triumphantly carried a live one, usually a wowlah or boa-constrictor. He caught the latter sort with a cleft stick, and was often well squeezed in the powerful coils before he deposited his capture at the college. One half-grown wowlah, about seven or eight feet long, gave him a particularly hard tussle and even succeeded in biting him severely in the hand. But the wowlahs are not poisonous: they kill their prey by squeezing. Stanton came soon to be rather

famous locally. When some Creole workmen in a near-by place found a great snake under a log, they came running to the college for the "snake doctah," and were as much awed as delighted to see Stanton carry it home alive. The Caribs at Stann Creek were all convinced that Stanton's walking-stick was his "voodoo" for charming snakes, and dared not so much as to touch it. Some of his live wowlahs he brought with him to the States, donating them to various public zoological gardens.

There were two "long vacations" in the school years at Belize, each of about a month's duration; one occurring around Christmas time, the other in May, in the latter part of the dry season. The Christmas holidays were spent mostly in Belize, and part of them taken up by the annual retreat of eight days. The other was the real holiday, and it was passed in some of the outlying mission stations. These vacations were times of delight for Stanton. He rode, hunted, swam: explored rivers and swamps and jungles: collected furiously. And indeed there was delight in them for any live man. It is worth, even on the most natural basis, months of drudgery in the class-room for the sake of just once sailing tropic waters by night: in a swift, high-masted, native canoe, with no light save that of the stars above

and the flashing phosphorescence tipping every wave and streaking in long lines of silver from your bows. One can forget a good deal of weary grind and privation in the moment when one rounds the headland out of the lazy sea, and swinging in toward the setting sun, beholds suddenly before one a great shining, silent lagoon, palm-fringed, studded with green islands, and beyond it the swift abruptness of purple mountains against the gold of evening.

Stanton was an ascetic, severe in his diet, rather scorning luxuries. But the languorous South took hold upon him, we must fancy, for in his first vacation he took up again the practice of smoking, abandoned at his entrance into the Society some ten years before. We mention this trifle, in the expectation that some may seriously consider it a sort of moral backsliding. Perhaps it was. Perhaps it was only a more intelligent application of old principles. Part of religious growth is the gaining of perspective, the learning to strike more shrewdly and not to waste energy on details of small importance. The trained athlete may not still go through all the motions of a beginner; he is beginning to accomplish, instead of merely drilling and exercising. His *form* may not be so meticulously

careful, but his achievements are greater. One thing certain, of which this detail is at most an instance not a proof, was that Stanton had in his creed no taint of Manichaeism.

It was in this first vacation too that Stanton began seriously to gather notes for a book on the fauna of British Honduras. The book was finished, two volumes, some thirteen years later — and after his death the manuscript mysteriously disappeared and is, apparently, lost for ever. It was a clever book, and I believe its loss a real misfortune. He knew his subject remarkably well, and he wrote about it simply and directly with a wealth of interesting detail gathered from observation. But it must be said he did not advance without slips in his knowledge of the fauna. One such slip is worth noting.

When he was at Stann Creek (a Carib village to the south of Belize) in the May of 1898, an old Yankee prospector dropped in at the mission house one day with a report of a good-sized drove of peccaries seen near a village called All Pines. Stanton and the Superior of the mission, keen for fresh meat, took their guns promptly and set out after them. The peccary is a sort of wild pig, running in droves, swift, plucky, and equipped with

formidable tusks and a blind, charging rage. The two hunters picked up the trail, followed it deep into the bush to a point where it divided. They separated, to follow each of the branching tracks. In a few minutes Stanton fired, and shouted exultingly, "I've got one!" His companion sighted his quarry almost at the same time. There was a regular fusilade of shots, wild squealings, great excitement. The hunters, in fine feather, dragged out five carcasses to where they had left their horses. There was more than they could carry, so they began cutting out the hams and loins. A native came by, and they bade him help himself to the meat; but he only grinned and shook his head and passed on. That was a bit strange! Every one always shared in the luck of a hunt. But they were too busy to think much. They packed their meat and rode back to Stann Creek. Evening brought a small farmer, sullenly angry, with a claim of eighteen dollars for four young porkers of his, which formed part of the bag of five peccaries. Of course the hunters paid: even added a few dollars for secrecy. But the story was too good to keep. The local police captain went up to Belize on official business, and the fame of the hunters was waiting for them when they returned.

But it was probably during this same vacation that Stanton discovered the plant which is named after him, "Asplenium Stantoni Copeland": a beautiful sub-tropical fern. Life has its compensations, you see; though it must be admitted there were a hundred to chaff him about "peccaries" for one who had so much as heard of "Asplenium Stantoni."

The thing most of note about these vacations, however, was that they introduced him to the real life of the missions. They were by no means all play. He went about with the missionaries on their rounds from village to village; saw their work, the field before them, the conditions of that work; even helped in it the little he could. It was a crude life, full of discomforts, full of monotonous toil, with great opportunities to do good, but with great obstacles to be overcome. He lived on their scanty fare, slept in hammocks or on the ground, knew the pest of insect-life, tried conclusions with the dull apathy of the Indians. He spent longs days in the saddle, along "deer-paths" overgrown with tangled bush, and came by evenings into squat thatch villages where, prickling all over with "warri ticks," he sat down to a meal of yams and tortillas of In-

dian corn. He learned to sleep, stretched on the earth, with a stool tilted over his head and some of his clothes draped over the stool to keep out the sand-flies. He caught a glimpse of the loneliness of that life. Your Central American Maya Indian is by no means a bad chap, but he is singularly silent and uncommunicative; and the missionaries ordinarily work alone.

The upshot of it all was that at last he felt he had come into his own, that he had found his work and his place in life. He dedicated himself to the mission. For ten years or more in the Society he had really drifted, not as an idler, but rather as a boy; doing such work as was set before him, but rather perfunctorily, without much interest, smilingly unconcerned. Now he had a vital object, a purpose that could really enkindle him. It was the old, old miracle of growth, from a boy to a man.

His new and real vocation brought no outward change in him, of course. He was still the quiet, easy-going Stanton to all appearance: not at all a man carried out of himself, not a sudden fanatic. His character did not change, it merely settled and took sharper outline and became definite where before it had been vague. He was a new man in one

sense, yet you would read the newness, not in an hour or a day, but only in the steady conduct of his life.

He set about studying Maya, the chief native language, with the Reverend Pastor Molina, S.J., himself a Mexican of part Maya blood and a thorough master of the strange old language. And he told his superiors that if they wanted a man for the mission, he was ready so soon as he should have completed his theology and been ordained priest. He was indeed to come back to Honduras, but not until more than six years had passed: and the six years carried him widely over the face of the earth.

CHAPTER V

By the summer of 1899, after his three years in Honduras, Stanton had finished the usual five years of teaching done by Jesuit scholastics. Another scholastic was sent to Belize to take his place, and toward the end of June, Stanton returned to the States to begin his course in theology. It was vacation time in the States, and he posted up to the villa at Waupaca in the northern part of Wisconsin, where the other teaching scholastics were spending the summer. He brought with him a great clutter of "specimens," including half a dozen live wowlahs.

From Waupaca he wrote, on July 24, to the scholastic who had succeeded to his post in Belize:

". . . You may imagine the bombardment of questions which I had to stand when I got to the Villa, nor have they ceased yet. They tell me I have been bought up by the Provincial to boom Belize. They have been trying all sorts of ways to get me 'off my guard' (!), but they say I am too well primed and confess they have not been able to get one word out of me against Belize. Many of the brethren are still

incredulous and have the most fantastic notions of St. John's College and of the missions, etc., etc. First impressions are hard to eradicate. . . . My reptilian pets became quite famous during my trip. I brought them as far as Chicago, where the smallest one died, and I concluded to leave the rest of them there, as I feared the colder climate of Wisconsin would kill all of them."

Mid-August saw him back in St. Louis, ready for the theological grind. He was amongst his old comrades again, some of whom he had not seen during the five years of teaching which had scattered them about the province. Five years are a long time for young men, and bring notable changes. They had all grown up mentally, in varying measures; they had known small responsibilities and had tested themselves in little ways. They remarked the growth and change in each other; but in none more than in Stanton.

"He was a different man," says one of his companions of the time. "None of us seemed to have matured more in character than he had. It was not an obvious change, though we felt it in some sort from the first time we met him after his return. Outwardly he was quite the same man, with the same easy, drawling way. Yet we sensed, subtilely but strongly, that the old indolence was gone

for ever, that he was more purposeful, more positive, more sure of himself. He was never an aggressive talker, a man to take the floor without invitation; nor did he become such now. But when he spoke now, it was with a new force, a quiet something in voice and manner that compelled interest and attention, and that was a source of astonishment to us all until we had become accustomed to the new Stanton."

He kept his own counsel, as usual. No one knew, at the time, of his purpose to return to the mission; though before long many suspected it. But he was a stalwart champion of the mission in all discussions. During the hour of recreation after meals a group of theologians gathered daily on one of the stair-cases, and dubbed itself "The Honduras Club." Stanton was its president. It was a very jolly group, made up of men of keen wit; and its chatter was often uproarious. Everything Honduranean was debated, burlesqued, attacked and defended. "Letters from the front" were read aloud, plans were made in wild grotesque or mock serious. It was all great fun: for Stanton it masked the serious interest of his real life's purpose.

His task during these years was to study scientific theology. There were two theological courses,

one more elaborate than the other, and at that time requiring four years where the other took but three, (though since then, by Papal decree, both courses are of four years duration). Whether one studied "the long course" or "the short course" in theology was not left to the choice of the individual; it was determined by his superiors on the basis of his scientific bent and talent as shown chiefly by his success or failure in the preceding philosophical studies. Stanton was entered at the beginning in the long course, the four years of theology with rather a severe program of studies.

Now a knowledge of theology is extremely important for a priest, even if he be to work amongst ignorant peoples in a mission. Stanton knew this, and was honestly set upon getting a good hold upon the science. However, both courses offered opportunity for that essential understanding of Catholic truth; the difference between them being only a difference of refinement and subtilety in the discussion of mooted and abstract points of doctrine. For him, the practical difference was that in the long course his time would be wholly taken up in the niceties of a science which, for all its necessity to him, was not his specialty; whereas in the less elaborate course he could, whilst getting a more than

adequate training in theology, find leisure to carry on other studies of great value for his work, especially the study of Spanish and Maya. It did not take him long to decide that he really had no business in the long course, and he straightway asked his provincial superior (as it was quite proper for him to ask) that he might be transferred to the other class. However, his superior refused his request, giving him only the comfort of a hint at the law which ordained that a long course student who failed in the examination in any year should thereafter continue his studies in the short course. The hint was not lost, as events show. In the meantime Stanton gathered his books around him — not without moaning — and solemnly read theology.

But these were dreary days. His text-books were as ashes in his mouth. The drill-like routine of student life fretted him, as it has fretted thousands before and after him. Life in a city, with its awful burden of clean collars and blacked shoes and etiquetical clothing when one went abroad, was horrible to him. The smoke and dust and noise of his surroundings drove him back in fancy to the quiet South, with its clean trade-winds blowing across the sea and the sleepy land. He dreamed like a school-boy, and chafed like a school-boy, and scowled at

his books. But he could laugh at himself, as a school-boy cannot; and he had a vision of a hard life after the years of school that was bright as a star and very comforting.

His letters of this period are whimsically, humorously plaintive. He hates his surroundings and grimaces at them. Even the relief of letters is half denied him, since by the rule his letters to other Jesuits must be in Latin — horrible thought! It was only on greater feasts that the theologians might write letters in English. Here is one to his successor in Belize. It is dated September 17, 1899, some two weeks after classes had begun, and is a hodge-podge of barbaric Latin, Spanish, and English:

"Frater in Xto Carissime: Jamjam incepit ordo regularis in Sancti Ludovici Universitate, et igitur in multis difficultatibus in epistolis longis scribendis me invenio. O me miserum! Tamen conabor meipsum exprimere quam optime possim. Proinde te rogo, ne respicias errores meae latinitatis, sed attendas ad ea quae volo dicere.

"Muchas gracias para la ultima carta tuya y para el photo. No me gustaba oir del cambio del D . . . a Corozal, pero espero y creo yo que antes mucho tiempo todas estas cosas en Belize sean bien arregladas.

"Ahora de negocios. Ne obliviscaris my instruments. The crucifix is mine. In the same drawer, if

I mistake not, I left my only decent razor et nescio quae alia. Potes rogare hermano Miguel si non potest inveniri. Hic enim non apparet in meo trunk.

"Vellem scribere nunc de multis aliis rebus, sed necesse est esperar donec 'licet scribere anglice.' Sum ego quasi sepultus intra quatuor muros albos, circumdatus fumo, pulvere, calore, libris magnis theologicis, viis electricis, et omnibus generibus strepituum obnoxiorum. Oh! for a few whiffs of pure sea breeze, or even upriver swamps! Timeo ne vigor meus totaliter evanescit ante conclusionem meorum studiorum theolog.

"Sed in manibus Dei sumus.

"Al fin, hermano mio, hagame el favor de tirar en la caja algunos libros viejos espanoles, to fill up space, e.g., Gramatica de la Leng. Cast. (the Academy's), or any old thing at all. I'm starving for Spanish.

"Tempus fugit. Hasta el proximo 'licet anglice.' Adios, adios.

Tuus in Xto."

Life in St. Louis was only an interlude for him now, and decidedly in a minor key at that. Not that he was gloomy or morose: not at all. No man in the house of studies was cheerier or a better companion. Nor was it an assumed cheeriness, the rather painful sort worn in public on strict grounds of virtue. It was part of his temperament to be cheerful, the result of native good-humor and good sense as well as of deliberate principle; it belonged to his characteristic mental poise. But it was cheer-

fulness in despite of his environment, not because of it. He had the healthy impatience that goes with a definite purpose in life, he was intolerant because he had become energetic. And all this was æons away from the dawdling Stanton of his philosophy days. On October 15, 1899, he writes again to his Belize correspondent, this time in English:

"Many thanks for your kind and interesting letters and photos. I feel renewed life in me when I receive even the least thing which has ever been under the bright skies of my adopted country. My interest in Belize has increased tenfold since my departure, and even the slightest items about the college, museum, or anything else will be most acceptable. . . . Gee whiz! how I would enoy a pull up to the Haulover or a plunge in the sea! But here is an eternal *sit*."

In the meantime he had an eye open for any "specimens" to be found round about St. Louis. His walks always took him promptly out of the city, into the open country where one might come upon beetles, snakes, shells, wild flowers. Soon his room was littered with an omnium gatherum of such things, which, as he said, "were pleasant to look at, and helped to cover up the text-books on theology." He even acquired a few live snakes, little fellows, to be sure, and not such interesting companions as his Honduranean wowlahs. Now and then there was

considerable commotion along his corridor and some wild, promiscuous hurling of books, shoes, and lighter articles of furniture, when one of Stanton's snakes strolled out of his room for a promenade. Some of the more nervous brethren used to speak their minds freely to him after stepping on a snake in the dark corridor, but Stanton just grinned and promised to lecture his pets.

He still kept on too with his notes on the "Fauna of British Honduras," the material for his ill-fated book. On January 21, 1900, he writes to Belize:

". . . Concerning my notes on the reptiles, I may say that I have finished not only the reptiles (including also turtles, crocodiles, and lizards), but also the molluscs and the crustacea. But I must go over them again, as I think there are a few points still to be attended to. Then I must finish the echini, coelenterates, and perhaps the mammals. I thought I might have things ready to send by this box, but I am sure by the next one everything will be in order. I have taken up all the species named in our museum, together with a few explanatory remarks concerning the different families to which they belong. Don't forget, whenever you have any more specimens identified, to send me the names, so that I may be able to add them to my own list for my personal information. . . .

"Life about the scholasticate is quiet and uneventful; the only element of excitement being those *delightful! ! !* circles — especially when you yourself are

on, which happens now about every other week. We have one 'walk of obligation'— i.e., Thursday mornings. This is about the only time I ever leave the house. Our big cities have lost all their attraction for me, if ever they had any. The brethren here know me as 'Honduras Bill' or 'Honduras Buck'; not very euphonious names, to be sure!"

Honduras is the note of every letter. It is strangely persistent. His mission seems to have got into the fibres of the man. It dominates all his thought, like a "fixed idea." Time does not dull his interest in it, nor can any occupation take his mind from it. Almost two years after he had left Belize, he writes:

"Thanks for the interesting description of your trip to Northern River. Such letters come like a gleam of golden Belize sunshine, like the bright waters that roll lazily over the painted coral gardens and break with delightful music upon the sparkling sands beside our tropic sea. I forget for a moment the cold leaden skies of Missouri and the smoke-defiled air of St. Louis, and live again amid the winding streams with deep green borders of mangrove, waving palms, poke-no-boys, and flowering orchids. . . .

"When you write again, please let me know whether the village and *church* at Maskell's Bank are on the northern or southern side of the river, as I am making a large map of the mission with all the churches, chapels, and stations marked, and I wish to make it as exact as possible."

Yet one must not get the notion that these years in St. Louis are just a time of empty sighing, of dawdling over dilettante work in natural history. Scientific, dogmatic theology took comparatively little of his time, it is true; and at the end of his first year he gracefully failed in examination and passed over, with no regrets, to the peaceful shades of the short course. But he had not really shirked his work in theology, and though he had no enthusiasm for it, he did not let this lack of enthusiasm leave him empty-handed when he had finished his study. One branch, moreover, moral theology, he studied with decided interest and more than passable success. That, of course, was quite indispensable to him as a priest; and all Stanton's ambitions were priestly, not scientific. If he dreamed of the tropical mission, in his heart it was of the people in it, of his work for them; though his lips might speak only of its fauna and flora. Where he chafed under the work of study was only where the study was of little profit for the very practical end he had in view. Another part of his equipment as a priest in the mission was his knowledge of languages. At that too he worked very hard. He read a great deal of Spanish, and eagerly used every opportunity of speaking it. He continued the study of Maya,

the Indian language most used in Honduras. On March 24, 1901, he writes to Belize:

". . . You need not fear that I have given up hope of the Maya. I have managed to gather together, whilst in the Colony and since, from various sources, a Maya-English vocabulary of over 3,500 words, which I have just arranged in alphabetical order, and which may come in handy in the future. In vacation I intend to fix up a little Maya grammar with English text, for myself, seeing that nothing of the kind has yet been done by Fr. M. . . . If only I had a chance to spend the vacation months in the mission, e.g., with M . . . or some one else in the north of the Colony, I am sure something of permanent utility in this matter could be accomplished — but — I am still only a young scholastic, you know. When I first returned I had hopes that I might be given a chance of acquiring Spanish at least, but I have given up those hopes now, as the fates seem to have decreed otherwise. I hope that those who come after me may be more fortunate in this respect. I am thoroughly convinced, however, that until young fathers are sent to the mission, fully equipped with Spanish *beforehand,* little can be accomplished, at least outside the city of Belize. . . .

"What a dread there seems to be of Belize up here in the province! The cry is now, 'The Philippines! They ought to give us the Philippines!' *Before the war,* 'we shouldn't have Belize, because we *have too much work in our own province* and cannot spare men for that old hole.' But *now* we ought to get the Philippines — which would require fifty men or more!! Strange, isn't it? . . ,

"Tell your Rev. Superior that I am very thankful for his kind offers concerning the Cayo, and tell him that, in the rush for the mission during the next two years, I hope I shall not be cut out of a job. When Fr. Algue passed through here on his return to the Philippines, he put in a request for me to the Provincial, to have me go to Manila; but of course I couldn't think of deserting Honduras, my first love."

But the question of the Philippines, so lightly dismissed in his letter, was not one for him to settle. Father Algue's request was strongly urged upon Stanton's superiors and was being seriously considered, though at the time nothing more was said to Stanton. He himself seems to have put the matter quite out of his mind, indeed not to have been concerned about it at all. The spring and early summer passed with no further reference to it. His thoughts were as busy as ever about *his* mission, were following the life and work of the men there. Spring in the States is the close of the dry season in Honduras, the hottest time of the year, when schools are closed and the teachers get away for a holiday. They went to the northern part of the colony that May, up near the Mexican border. Stanton is all keenness, as eager as if he were still back in the mission. In a letter of May 6, he writes:

"What is the latest regarding the Mexican cam-

paign against the Santa Cruz? How will the result affect the northern districts of the Colony? You will probably have a good chance to add to the collections during the month. Tigers are said to be rather common between Corozal and Consejo. Hope you and O'L —— have a chance to drop a few. Any beetles or other such insects which you may come across you might throw into a bottle of formalin and bring up with you. Try to get a good photo *at close range* of a wee-wee nest, and one of the termite nest (comejen)."

Summer drew to its height in St. Louis. June saw the usual examinations, the closing of classes, the flitting for the holidays. The villas in Wisconsin were overcrowded. Thirty or forty of the scholastics had to seek elsewhere for a place to spend the summer. A score of them, including Stanton, were sent to the college at St. Mary's, Kansas, some four hundred miles west of St. Louis. The boys of the college had, of course, gone home; so there was plenty of room in their dormitories. The little group of theologians had gone through the annual eight days in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, and the time of vacation was nearing its end, with the return to St. Louis only a few days off, when Stanton received sudden word to go to Manila. Here is his letter to Belize telling the news:

"Don't faint at this bit of news. Here is the text

of a short letter I had from Fr. Provincial two days ago:

"'Dear Mr. Stanton: The consultors and myself have concluded to send you to the Philippines, to Manila, at the request of Fr. Algue and the Provincial of Arragon. As you have no course at the University that you can follow in class next year, you may make your third year of theology in Manila and be ordained there. You will thus get a chance of learning Spanish. They ask for some one for two or three years. You will *thus be better fitted for Honduras.* (Underlining my own.) Perhaps you can make your tertianship there too. Of this I am not so certain. About your time of departure I know nothing yet, but I do not think it will be long before you start.'

"Talk about your surprises! They are all guying me now about 'shaking' Belize—'pulling on' poor victims for Belize, so that I could sneak out of the *blessed* hole myself. But never fear, old boy, I shan't go back on my first love. I'll be ready for the 'bush' when I have finished my tertianship, if the Lord spares me so long.

"What messages does 'el Padre viejo' wish me to bring to his old friends in the Philippines? Tell him I have begun to brush up all the Spanish swear words and curses he taught me in Belize, so as to be properly equipped to instruct the youthful Filipinos. Now I hear him—'Canastos! caspita hombre! que tonterias! ese muchacho! ! !'"

It is very Jesuit, this letter. He is astonished; his plans are upset; practically without warning he

is packed off to a foreign field, half a world away from where he expected to be. Yet not only is there no expression of complaint or protest, but you are aware that there is not even a complaint suppressed. In perfect good-humor, in a most matter-of-fact way, he simply states and accepts the facts. It is a clean about-face, but he does not even change his stride. Oh, he is still going back to Honduras *some day;* Manila is only a detour, so to speak. But when one is all set on a goal, even a detour might entitle one to protest. Apparently, however, the mere idea of this has simply not occurred to Stanton. *He* is not deserting Honduras; his superiors have sent him away. So that's all right. It's really their funeral: he is only riding in the hearse. He came back to St. Louis, packed his trunk, gave away his snakes, and was in San Francisco by the end of the month.

CHAPTER VI

Now-a-days, when travel has become so common that a little jaunt to Thibet hardly furnishes matter for a drawing-room conversation, it may be thought a bore to set before a reader Stanton's letters on his voyage to the Far East. However, they are not offered as "travelogues" or pretentious bits of descriptive writing. Their value for us is an indirect portrayal of their writer; the man shows himself in his letters, unconsciously, yet clearly enough to the discerning. To that purpose we shall let this chapter be a cluster of citations from his letters. Besides, if any one does not wish to read them, he may just skip the whole chapter.

Stanton went out to Manila as an assistant in the Observatory conducted by the Jesuits there and lately become a part of the United States Government service; hence as a Government employee he was entitled to passage on one of the U. S. transports. He arrived in San Francisco just in time to miss a sailing, and had a delay in consequence of some two weeks, which he put in visiting some of

the old mission places of California. His jottings take up from the day of departure.

"U. S. Transport *Warren,* Honolulu, Hawaiian Ty., Sept. 26, 1901.

"Monday morning, the 16th, after running down town to make my last purchases of a few books and a little burning material for the voyage, I returned to the college and took leave of my friends there. Fr. Testa, who had been very kind during my stay in managing all business connected with my voyage, accompanied me to the steamer. We left the wharf promptly at noon, and stood out through the Golden Gate in a raw, misty, cold breeze. Everything about the bay looked cold and gloomy — real San Francisco weather, so far as I could judge by my two weeks' stay.

"We have about 160 passengers aboard, made up of army and navy officers, school teachers, Protestant ministers, army chaplains, army nurses, veterinary surgeons, wives of officers and soldiers, babies, etc. We had scarcely started when I was accosted by a portly, rather young, and pompous-looking individual in the uniform of an army chaplain, who introduced himself as Chaplain N—— from some town in Texas. He asked me if I were not Chaplain Steele of the 21st Infantry. Shortly after, I found, to my astonishment, that my room-mate was none other than the aforesaid Steele, a good, business-like fellow. The Quartermaster doubtless thought that the preachers ought to get along well together, and so we do, though it is rather an amusing combination. . . .

"At table I have been assigned a place beside the Captain, with the two ministers below me, the first mate at the foot, whilst three army officers and one lady occupy the remaining seats. So you see the wild Carib from the bush is being most courteously treated aboard the *Warren*.

"Third day out, breeze very mild, but clouds hid the sun all day, sea quite smooth.

"Thursday, 19th, the sky was clear all day. Balmy breezes came up from the south, reminding me of the sunny paradise beside the Caribbean, for which our friend 'tin twinty' is so eagerly preparing. . . . At 10:30 A. M. we had memorial services for the President, in the saloon, with Chaplain N—— presiding. All the ladies and officers were present, the latter in full uniform. After the singing of the national anthem, and an improvised prayer by the other chaplain, the presiding one made an introductory speech. Then Col. Fechet was called upon, as representing the Army. The next number on the program was an address by *Fr.* Stanton. The last-named gentleman had tried to get out of the performance, but under the circumstances that could not be done very gracefully, so he ventured a few remarks on the right understanding of the principle of human liberty and the Catholic doctrine on the principle of authority. He thought it a good chance to recall a few fundamental truths to minds which rarely dwell on such matters. Other speakers followed. Fr. S. was naturally wondering what effect his remarks had on his audience. One of the chief officers on board came up afterwards and complimented him on having touched on a phase of the question which

had been altogether overlooked by the other speakers. There was something solid in that, he said. So. Fr. S. felt that at least he had not made such a thundering big fool of himself.

"Friday, Sept. 20. Typical tropical morning, smooth sea, pleasant breeze, scattered clouds, occasional light showers. New faces still appearing from time to time on deck; though by now all seem to have got their sea-legs and people are becoming well acquainted with each other. The chaplains got up a spelling-bee in the evening, good fun for a while. Later, adjourned to the after deck and had some fair singing from ladies and young gentlemen. Some fine voices aboard. Strange to say, there is no instrumental music aboard but that of an accordion, which one of the sailors manipulates.

"Before turning in for the night, I watched the phosphorescent gleamings of the marine organisms, as the ship plowed through the waves, leaving a trail of fire after her. Straight in the path before us, a dense black cloud hung sweeping down to the horizon; a crescent moon crept out above its rim, and spilled a flood of silver light upon the sea.

"Sat. 21st. Glorious morning; sea calm and oily, nothing but the long, heaving swells and the plowing of the ship to disturb its surface. Flying fish like darts of silver leap from the sea and shoot through the air, sometimes for a hundred yards distance.

"In the evening Chaplain N—— brought the sailor with the accordion for a little music. Scarcely had the thing started, when the feet of the young people began to feel very light, and in a moment half a dozen couples were doing the light fantastic with a

gusto. An improvised cake walk soon succeeded, and things became quite gay; every one but the chaplain enjoying himself immensely. The latter is a strict Methodist and much averse to dancing, and seeing that he had been the cause of the levity by bringing up the accordion, he felt quite discomfited. Turning to me, he said in his slow, southern drawl, 'Well, now, I didn't foresee such a turn of events!' He had to stand a good deal of teasing from his friends. Afterwards we got one of the coon waiters up, and you should have seen him pound that deck and twist his legs into bow knots! We clapped that nigger up till he could scarcely stand any longer.

"Sun. 22nd. Fine breeze — in the trade winds — more flying fish. Protestants held services at 10:30 A. M. Had a great chat with the first mate, Griffiths, a Welshman, a regular weather-beaten sea-dog, and a big-hearted old fellow. The Captain of the vessel is an Australian and most of the sailors are Welshmen, with a good sprinkling of Irishmen.

"Tues. 23d. The welcome sight of land to our left greeted us at six A. M. It was the island of Molokai, the scene of the heroic sacrifice of Father Damien. By noon the mountain peaks of Oahu loomed up to our right, and the decks became crowded.

". . . I have an engagement to go out to the Pali in a few moments, so must put off any further scratchings till later.

U. S. Trans. Warren, Oct. 8, 1901.

"Still sailing over the deep — not a sail or sign of human life outside of our own ship since we left Honolulu ten days ago. I think I left you last in

sight of Oahu. Well, let me inflict some more Hawaiian jottings which I hope to send off by the first mail that leaves Manila after my arrival.

"How we did cheer up at sight of those beautiful islands! About noon of Tuesday, 24th, we were quite close to the red and purple volcanic masses, against the base of which the noisy breakers dashed their feathery crests. The side of the island first approached appears rather barren of vegetation, but on turning the first point the scene changes. Straight ahead is seen a bold promontory, called Diamond Head, near the base of which is the light-house. Between the first point and Diamond Head stretches a large bay, with green mountainsides rising behind, coconut palms fringing the shore, picturesque clusters of native huts peeping from their green surroundings. Here and there the volcanic rocks reach right down to the sea and are hollowed out into fantastic caverns by the surf. Passing Diamond Head, we came in sight of a faery scene, the lovely Waikiki beach, the perpetual summer resort for the residents of Honolulu. Charming cottages embowered in tropical foliage line the shore. Behind them the mountains rose, an infinite variety of green and purple up to the very peaks. These latter were wrapped in swaying and changing masses of clouds, swift-moving, mysterious, from which showers broke here and there. Bright villas perched high up on the hillsides. Off to the left a few wreaths of smoke from tall chimneys showed the location of Honolulu itself.

"As we steamed into the harbour, the boat was surrounded by a crowd of young Kanakas, whose lithe velvety limbs gleamed in the blue waters. They were

soon diving for the coins which the passengers threw overboard. And such diving! As soon as a coin struck the water, down went heads and arms, and for a moment nothing was seen but a confused tangle of glistening legs disappearing gradually into the depths. But before long up came the smiling faces, and in the waving hand of one the coin glistened securely. This went into the mouth of the successful little diver, and all were ready for another turn.

" We made the wharf at 4:30, and found it crowded with magnificent Kanakas, broad-shouldered and powerful-looking fellows, but spoiled of their poetry by their barbarous modern garments. As we had an hour before dinner, I took a stroll through the business part of town. Most of the shops and the streets seemed to be in possession of the Chinese and Japs, all in their native costume. Got back to ship at 6:30 and had dinner. After dinner we made a party to go out to Waikiki and take a surf bath by moonlight. About thirty of us took the horse cars near the wharf. Waikiki is about three miles from Honolulu, and the ride along the beautiful road by moonlight was quite delightful. At times the odor of tube-roses and other flowers was overpowering in its sweetness. We stopped at the Hawaiian Hotel Annex, a large, neat bathing establishment, where towels and bathing suits were secured for a trifle. In a few moments I stepped out on the moonlit sands and thanked God for the Waikiki beach, the world-famed. The rolling, rushing breakers burst in a mass of foam on the silvery sands at my feet. The next instant, the refreshing waters closed over the more or less supple limbs of Buck Stanton. What a relief after being cramped up

in a ship for over a week! And what undignified somersaults some of our party did turn, when the swift, foaming breakers caught them where they lived and rolled them over on the beach, a tangle of arms, legs and bathing suits, and then, before they could scramble to their feet, slid them back again into the water, just in time to be caught by the next one. These rollers beat Stann Creek all hollow!

"Without knowing it, I made quite a hit on this occasion. My companion to the beach was a young officer, a graduate of Pennsylvania, of a strapping athletic build. We swam out beyond the crowd, and he proposed that we stretch our limbs in a little race to the diving platform, some hundred and fifty yards away. He swam well, but I left him far in the rear, much to his surprise. He complimented me on my stroke, and expressed his astonishment that the 'Padre' (my usual appellation on board) could swim so well. I gave no further thought to the occurrence, but the day following he insisted that we should take another dip by daylight. This time a young naval officer accompanied us, a man of gigantic frame. When we came out on the veranda overhanging the beach, we found nearly all the passengers of the *Warren,* and a good part of the crew, scattered about in knots, as if awaiting something of interest. I heard the word 'Padre' mentioned now and again, and began to wonder what was up. The three of us were soon in the waves, and, as I had begun to suspect, we were to have another race, but this time some quarter of a mile. I was in for anything in that line, though when I looked at the huge muscularity of the naval officer, I knew I was up against the real thing. However,

thought I, I'll have the exercise at any rate. I saw now the object of the crowds on the veranda.

"Off we started, observed of all observers. The naval man shot out from the line like a cannon ball, but before he had gone fifty yards I was with him neck and neck, and at the goal found him more than fifty feet in the rear. When he climbed up on the platform, he caught my hand and congratulated me, and said: 'Padre, I've raced against dozens of first-class swimmers in the east, many of them with big reputations, and have never been beaten until this moment. I'll be hanged if I ever saw such a powerful overhand stroke in my life. Let me look at your arm and hand.' He held up his brawny arm alongside of mine. 'Well,' said he, 'I can't understand it! My hand and arm would make three of yours, and yet I can't come near that stroke of yours.'

"I then learned that talk about the preceding day's swim had stirred up excitement amongst crew and passengers, and they had chosen their best man to swim with the Padre that afternoon. When I saw how things stood, I said to myself, 'Well, here's another score for the Honduras Club! The old H. C. is in it yet! Why, it is getting known away over here in the middle of the Pacific!'

"We dined at the hotel, and when we returned to the ship, after another moonlight bath, it was quite late — or rather early — in the morning.

"We stayed in port from Tuesday afternoon till Friday morning, and you may be sure I made the most of that time. What are my impressions of Honolulu? Well, old man, it surpasses anything I have ever seen, or hope to see. The Islands have been

well called the paradise of the Pacific. The city, outside of the few business streets, is a veritable tropical botanical garden. Every house is surrounded by luxuriant palms of divers kinds. The hedges are mostly stephanotis, and at the Kamehameha school there is a hedge, three hundred yards long, of the night-blooming cereus, with thousands of its huge blossoms scattering their overpowering fragrance on the moonlit night. All the streets are wonderfully smooth and clean, making fine bicycle roads. It is a curious sight to see dozens of Chinese flying down the street on a wheel, pigtail standing out behind. All the women here, apparently, ride horseback astride; not once did I see one riding otherwise.

"The native Kanakas now seem lost in the crowd of Orientals and Americans. It is said the land is now nearly all owned by the foreigners, many of them missionaries, who came here and civilized the natives out of their possessions and finally off the face of the earth. In the midst of this earthly paradise, the hospitable, kind-hearted, gentle native Hawaiian is now a stranger in the land, robbed of all he had, and dying off rapidly of diseases, before unknown, which the white man brought to his once happy isles.

"Living seems to be rather high in Honolulu, at least for strangers. One of our passengers paid three dollars for a breakfast of coffee, beefsteak, and potatoes; another paid thirty-five cents for two boiled eggs, and twenty-five cents for lemonade. But I suppose strangers are easy prey for the Japs and Chinese who run all the shops. We all finally concluded to take our meals aboard, else we were afraid we should be bankrupt before we left the town.

"Whilst strolling through the town, I found some exquisite Protestant churches, of all denominations, but could not spy the Catholic church. I called a cab, and we were there in five minutes. The church is very modest in its exterior, compared with its Protestant neighbours, but the interior is beautifully decorated. From the church I went to the residence of the Bishop near-by and introduced myself. He speaks English quite well, and we were soon at home with each other. Seven or eight priests were in the house at the time, and others came the same day. They were gathering for their annual retreat. France, Belgium, Germany, and Holland are represented amongst them. Several are old Jesuit boys from Turnhout. I dined with them, and enjoyed a good smoke and chat afterward. As the day happened to be the anniversary of the Bishop's consecration, there was exposition all day in the church, and I had a chance to listen to the mellifluous Hawaiian language as the natives said their prayers aloud before the Blessed Sacrament.

"After supper on board ship, I returned to the church for solemn benediction. It was a beautiful sight. The church was crowded to overflowing, the music was good, and the devotion of the natives was impressive. After benediction I had another smoke and chat with the missionaries, and passed a very pleasant hour. Next morning I had a chance for confession, Mass, and Communion. During the day I made an excursion up the volcano behind the city, and gathered some specimens of lava; took another turn at the beach; and after dinner got off some letters.

"At six o'clock promptly, next morning, we left

the wharf on our long three weeks' stretch. I regretted that I had not at least a few weeks in beautiful Honolulu. Beyond any doubt, there is a witching attractiveness in this garden of the Pacific.

"During the first two days out from Honolulu I felt a little uncomfortable and lost my appetite, but was not what one would call sick. Now I am all right, but the voyage is beginning to seem very long.

". . . Last Saturday Chaplain S—— informed me that I was expected to conduct 'the Sabbath service to-morrow.' I told him kindly that I would resign in his favour. This did not satisfy him. In the morning, he said I must officiate, all were expecting me, the *ladies* especially were most anxious to hear me, etc., etc. I explained to him as politely as possible that I would conduct all my services privately, and that if there was to be any public service he or the other chaplain would have to carry it on. As a matter of fact there was no service, though many of the ladies did come and assured me they would be '*so* delighted' if I would give the Sabbath address. But Buck Stanton told them just as suavely that he would conduct no such service, so the Sunday passed without it. A heavy squall struck the vessel in the afternoon, and many of the passengers passed the rest of the day in the privacy of their cabins.

"Sat. Oct. 12th. The weather for the last few days has been very warm and close — air full of moisture. Everything in the cabins damp, especially my smoking tobacco, which I had to put out in the sun to dry, else I should have had to wring the water out of it before smoking. Light attire is the order of the day. Many of the gentlemen on board get out on deck in the early

hours before the women are supposed to be up, and have the sailors turn the big fire hose on them by way of a shower bath. They have lots of fun over their morning bath, especially the sailors. The attire of the bonton ladies aboard during these warm days is more varied in style, but not more extensive, than that of many of my Honduras lady friends. I myself run about very modestly clothed, though decidedly negligé; but at meals the gentlemen are all supposed to appear in coats, whereas the ladies — well, they dispense with theirs.

"Oct. 15. Last night we came in sight of the long looked for Philippines. On our left the bold outlines of Cape Engaño loomed up out of the mist about 4:00 P. M. How we did rejoice at the sight! We went down to dinner at 5:30 in good spirits, but when we came on deck after the meal the sea and sky looked rather ominous. Soon a driving rain set in, accompanied by a terrific wind. The seas broke over the deck, and we crouched about in odd corners looking for protection, for it was too stuffy to go below. We were in the entrance of the China Sea, right in the path of the typhoons and during the usual typhoon month. Just on our right two high rocky peaks jutted out of the waves, marking the spot where the ill-fated *Charleston* went down last year. As night drew on, instead of continuing on our course the captain turned right about into the teeth of the wind and beat up and down in front of the lighthouse all night. At 2:00 A. M. the force of the wind abated, and we once more turned to our course, and the *Warren* went boldly into the China Sea. We awoke this morning in full view of the beautiful mountainous northern Luzon. The tops of

the peaks and the valleys along their sides were shrouded in rolling clouds. When I stepped out of my cabin, I found the water about a foot deep on the deck; and the rolling of the ship was slopping the water right over the high threshold, soaking the floor of the cabin and wetting my bag and books on the floor. The sky remained cloudy all day, and the wind fresh. We expected to get into Manila to-morrow morning, but on account of our little storm we shall not get in until late to-morrow evening, and consequently shall not get to shore before Thursday morning. But at last our thirty-one days' sea voyage is about over.

"Oct. 16, 5:00 P. M. Just getting into Manila Bay, passing Corregidor Island. The Transport *Sheridan* is coming out, and we can send our mail — no time to lose — may be two weeks till next chance. So good-bye. Regards to all the brethren."

CHAPTER VII

Stanton, when he left St. Louis, had still a year of theology to do before he would be ordained. He was to get through this year by private study, as best he could. The work that took up most of his time, however, was in the Observatory, where a better knowledge of English was needed than any of the Spanish Jesuits in Manila at that time possessed. The meteorological work of the Observatory was of immense importance. It issued weather forecasts, notably warnings of the dangerous typhoons, which of course had to be put into English for the benefit of American and British skippers. But perhaps it is better to let Stanton reveal himself further and speak for himself of his impressions of Manila and of conditions in the Islands and of what his work there was. The following extracts are from letters to a class-mate in St. Louis.

"Observatorio de Manila, November 21, 1901.

"Dear Old Man: I think I left you in Manila Bay, as we were steaming past historic Corregidor, with the U. S. Transport *Sheridan* just starting on her home-

ward voyage and waiting for whatever mail we had to send. . . . After wishing the *Sheridan* a safe journey homeward, we started directly across the Bay for Manila, twenty-seven miles distant. To our right we saw the famous Cavite and the position of the unfortunate Spanish ships, the skeletons of which are still to be seen rising above the waves. Darkness came on very suddenly, and when we anchored at 7:00 P. M. nothing could be seen but the glimmering lights of Manila, three miles away. We all heaved a sigh of relief that our long voyage was at an end.

"We did not get ashore, however, until about 10:30 next morning, Thursday, Nov. 17. There is no pier as yet, so we were taken ashore in the quartermaster's steam launch. The view of the city from the Bay is really beautiful; the many churches and conventual buildings are very imposing, and the grand driveway stretching along the water-front, with its avenues of coconut palms, makes a most charming foreground. A turn around the breakwater brought us into the mouth of the Pasig River; and then we did have sights! The scene was one of the busiest I have ever witnessed — steamers and tugs, barges, native cascos, and smaller craft, worked their way up and down the sluggish stream. The cascos were swarming with natives of all sexes and ages, in every stage of barbaric dress and undress; whilst the wharves were crowded with thousands of coolies, clad simply in their picturesque wide Chinese hats and very short nether garments, and engaged in loading coal into the barges. The coal was carried in baskets swinging from the ends of a bamboo pole slung over the bare shoulders. On our right the massive walls of the old city loomed up, covered almost

completely with moss and various tropical forms of vegetation. We soon pulled into the U. S. Quartermaster's wharf on the left.

"Immediately on landing I hired a small two-wheeled carriage, called a 'carreton,' drawn by a diminutive Filipino horse and driven by a cross-eyed native. I first enquired in Spanish if he knew where the Observatory was, and being answered in the affirmative, I jumped in and away we went. We drove through the crowded business streets, through swarms of Chinese and natives, past several *drunken Americans* (noble exponents of Anglo-Saxon civilization in the Philippines!), crossed the Puente de España and out on to the beautiful seaside drive which terminates at the historic Luneta. Just beyond the Luneta is the suburb Hermita, where the Observatorio is located. In a few moments we turned into the Calle de Padre Faura, named after Father Faura, S.J., the founder of the Observatory, and I saw the roof of the building looming up before me.

"When I came into the spacious entrance, the lay brother on duty, taking me for one of the curious Americanos who wanted to see the Observatory, was about to show me the card on which are printed the days and hours for visitors, for this happened not to be a visiting day. But when I asked for Fr. Algue, he thought I might be on some official business, and accordingly showed me up to his office. Fr. A. was taken completely by surprise. He knew that I was to come, but had no definite idea of the time when I was to put in an appearance, and I had not had a chance to send word beforehand. He welcomed me most cordially and introduced me in a few minutes to the rector

and the whole community. I find myself the only English-speaking man in the place. Of course Fr. Algue speaks English fairly well, and the three scholastics know a few words, but the entire community is Spanish and nearly all are from Catalonia. They seem to be very fine fellows and do their best to make the poor Americano feel at home; and they are succeeding very well.

"I should never end, should I attempt to describe all the interesting things that have struck me during the first few days in Manila; hence I shall confine myself, for the present at least, to a few points concerning our communities in the city. We have two communities here, quite distinct: one here at the Observatory, the other at the Ateneo Municipal, within the walled city, where the superior of the mission lives. The Ateneo is a college, with over eleven hundred boys, about 370 of whom are boarders. With perhaps a dozen exceptions, all the boys are native Filipinos or mestizos; and there are 75 native servants employed in the college and house. They have a fine museum of natural history, containing very complete collections of the fauna, flora, and ethnology of the Philippine Islands. The buildings are of three stories and spread over a considerable area, with enclosed courts, wide corridors, and very thick walls. They are within a stone's throw of the beach, and from the upper stories or roofs a magnificent view of the Bay is obtainable. Here they had a grand-stand view of the manœuvering of Dewey's fleet during the whole performance. Our buildings, together with the Augustinian convent adjoining, would have made one of the most conspicuous targets had the city been bombarded. Owing to the want of

space and the scattered arrangement of the buildings, Ours are now thinking of building anew and transferring the Ateneo to a more convenient part of the city. It is a great sight when classes are over to see the vast crowd of young Filipinos surging out from the school.

"Adjoining the Ateneo is our famous church of San Ignacio, with its exquisite interior, one mass of wonderful wood carving, all done by native Filipinos. There is a book with plates in the library at St. Louis which describes all the details of this truly grand edifice.

"Here at the Observatory the main building is an immense hollow square, one corner of which is devoted to the meteorological observatory. The community occupies two sides of the quadrangle on the upper floor, whilst the rest of the building is devoted to the college, which is known as the 'Escuela Normal' or Normal School. There are about 700 boys attending the classes, some 200 of whom are boarders. The rooms are all large, with high ceilings and very thick walls. My own room measures on the inside about 18 x 48 feet. A very wide and high double door opens out in front upon a sort of balcony with sliding blinds. Across the road is about as typical a Filipino village as one could find anywhere.

"All around the inner side of the quadrangle runs an enclosed corridor or cloister, some 25 or 30 feet wide. On the ground floor it is paved with cement, making a fine walk; whilst on the second story the floor is of hand polished Filipino mahogany, as are also the floors of all our rooms. All the rooms on the ground floor are paved with smooth tiles.

"The gardens or grounds surrounding the building cover about ten acres, filled with tropical vegetation. The magnetical observatory and astronomical observatory occupy distinct buildings in the garden. We have our own printing, lithographing, and binding establishment on the grounds. The whole observatory plant is one of the best institutions of its kind in the world.

"Nov. 23. Since my arrival we have had two typhoons which swept across the Islands, one a bit north of Manila, the other south. The Manila papers say that the former caught the *Sheridan* — the boat carrying my previous letter — and handled her so badly that she has had to be laid up for several weeks' repairs in Nagasaki, whilst the *Warren* has been despatched thither to take on to the States her mail and as many of the passengers and disabled soldiers as she can accommodate.

"The storm mentioned in my last letter (which we encountered around the northern point of Luzon) proved to be the outer edge of a typhoon which swept across Manila Bay, doing great damage to part of the shipping through the negligence of some of our American captains, who of course 'know all about everything.' The Observatory had sent them word thirty-six hours before the first appearance of the actual storm, but they neglected to take precautions until it was too late. These wise men will probably heed our warnings in the future.

"And what about the weather? Well, it has been moist, moist, moist, even with the sun shining, but not unpleasantly hot. The nights are delightfully cool, and the mosquitos have not bothered me — under the net.

"We are of course Spanish in our customs here, and many of them would sit rather strangely, I imagine, upon some of the brethren of the Collegium Maximum of St. Louis. However, I think I am catching on pretty well, all things considered. I find coat, vest, and *trousers* superfluities. It will not do to go into too many particulars; but I am sure that my old friend L—— would have a fit if he caught sight of me wandering about the streets of Manila in my Spanish cassock, closed in front (for excellent reasons), long Spanish mantle (manteo), something like Fr. C——'s big cloak, only very light and reaching almost to the ground, and to crown all one of those black clerical hats with flat round top, very wide brim, and rolled up at the sides!

"The daily order is about as follows: Rise at 4:30, meditation and Mass as usual; breakfast, or rather coffee or chocolate, right after Mass; 11:30, examen, litanies; dinner at noon. Recreation walking always, 'a la Française' I believe. At a quarter of eight, supper and recreation in the same way, examen, points of meditation, and retire at 9:30. There are no springs or mattrasses on our beds. A thin Filipino mat, something like a Chinese tea-sack, is unrolled on a cane concern stretched across the bed-frame. On this you put some sheets, and if the night be cold, a light blanket is at hand.

". . . There are a few other customs with which we are not familiar in the States, but I think I can accommodate myself pretty well. The Society is still the same all the world over, and national and local differences are after all mere trifles which should not disturb a man's peace of soul.

"November 29.

"Here I am again. I am pretty well settled down to work now. What with my theology, observatory work, various dealings with American officials and visitors, Customs House and divers other houses, the days do not hang heavy on my hands. I knock great fun out of some things. With my native gingerbread complexion, and togged out in a complete Spanish Padre's outfit, I am sure I am a sight. Every American I have met took me for an out-and-out Spanish Padre, or friar, or some such thing. It's a regular circus! This very morning I was down at the Customs House with one of our lay brothers to see about some packages waiting for us there. The clerk started jabbering away in Spanish in a rather lackadaisical way, as if it did not matter much to him whether or not we got our packages or how long we might have to wait for them. I let him go on for a bit. When I was tired, I said, 'Well, see here, perhaps we can manage things in a more business-like way if we go at it in English.' You should have seen the expression on that fellow's face. He said, 'Well, I be d——!' And after that was as attentive as one could wish.

"Last Thursday we went out to the villa, or 'casa de campo.' It is situated on the banks of the Pasig River in a village called Santa Ana, a few miles from town. We passed along the road and over the bridge where the first shots were exchanged between our troops and the Filipinos. The walls, floors, and ceilings of the villa itself are punctured and scored all over with bullet holes. The house was first taken over by the Spanish soldiers as a hospital, then the in-

surgents drove the Spaniards into the city and used the place as a barracks, next the Americans chased out the Filipinos and occupied it as a hospital, and now it is back once more to its original purpose. The house itself is a large, cool, and convenient building, but the grounds about it are rather small. The Pasig flows deep and swift at its very door, and you may imagine the temptation I had to take a plunge into its pleasant depths and try my strength against the current, but — I am a Spanish Padre now, and we do not do such things. I am told that during the long vacations which are spent here at the villa, some of the reckless spirits amongst the brethren slip down at nightfall, tie a rope about their waist, make the other end of it fast to an iron ring in the stone landing, and thus take a bath. I am anxiously looking forward to see how the operation is carried out. I hope we shan't have to wear hats and shoes! . . .

"Observatorio de Manila, December 10, 1901.

"Dear R——. Your letter dated October 6 reached me on the feast of St. Stanislaus, after what I presume was an uneventful voyage, but my last two to you have had some experiences. For the *Sheridan,* which carried the first of them, was badly done up by a tornado and put into Yokahama for repairs. The *Warren,* carrying the second, set out for Manila to take over the mail and passengers of the *Sheridan.* But before she got to the *Sheridan* she herself struck a reef and ripped off some plates and broke a few ribs, so that a third transport had to be sent to aid her. However, I hope both letters have arrived safely at their destination.

". . . Father Algue and the other Spanish fathers connected with the Observatory are placed in a very anomalous situation. They have been officially informed by the Spanish Government that according to Spanish law they have forfeited their right of nationality or citizenship by taking the oath of office under a foreign Government. On the other hand, no foreigner in the Philippines (nor Filipino) is allowed by our law to become an American citizen. So the poor chaps have no nationality, are not recognized as citizens of any country on earth! Quite a predicament, isn't it?

"Fr. S—— has just returned to Manila after an absence of three months. He has been establishing various new meteorological stations in the northern and southern parts of Luzon. He was detained nearly *two months* in Antimonon, a small town in the south, waiting for some boat to take him to Manila. Travelling facilities here don't seem to be much better than in Honduras!

"December 15.!!!!!!!!!!!

"Land of Moses! Talk about forces of nature! Give me thunder-storms, typhoons and tornados, but please pass me by when it comes to a good-sized 'temblor' or earthquake! We have just had a terrific shake this morning. I've never had such sensations in my life before. It was the most unearthly feeling one can imagine. I had just knelt down in chapel for a visit after my morning coffee, when I felt the whole house tremble violently; grating, rumbling sounds accompanied the movement; the heavy walls, some four feet thick, swayed back and forth, and the floor rose and fell with a sickly, jerky motion. I remained quiet

for about fifteen seconds, thinking it would be over in a moment. But finding that things were getting worse, I bolted out of the door, down the steps three at a time, got out on the heaving ground in the center of the patio or interior court, and looked around to see the boys piling out of their chapel door and making for my own position en masse. Most of them threw themselves on their knees and poured forth their prayers and acts of contrition in a most pitiable tone. I shall never forget that scene. The boys had been listening to an instruction from Fr. Rector after Mass, but nothing could restrain their wild instinct of self-preservation. The ground still continued to heave and fall, the huge walls swung first one way then another until I thought surely the whole edifice was about to collapse, the great trees in the patio swayed back and forth like so many reeds. But the staunch building remained uninjured. I thought the quake would never end; but suddenly it was all over, and no harm done, at least in our quarters. But in the city several houses were tumbled down and the arches of several churches demolished. This has been the most severe quake felt in Manila since 1880, and the longest in duration: it lasted more than a minute and a half. Comparatively little harm was done, however, owing to the fact that, though the vibrations were longer than usual, they succeeded each other more slowly than in smaller earthquakes of greater suddenness. . . .

"December 16, A. M.

"Another earthquake, but very slight, this morning at about the same hour as yesterday's — and three more yesterday afternoon and evening! little fellows.

Things seem to be getting lively down below — must be having a big dance on.

"I visited a model Filipino cigar factory the other day; went all through it. It is a small one, owned and carried on entirely by natives, and employs about three hundred men and women. Above the factory itself live the proprietor and his family. The greater part of this upper story is devoted to a beautiful chapel, nearly the size of the University chapel in St. Louis, finished in hard woods, decorated artistically with carvings, oil paintings, and frescos; everything in exquisite taste. Here all the employees hear Mass daily — and go through the Spiritual Exercises for five days every year! Just imagine such a thing in our St. Louis tobacco factories! But here we have Catholic Filipinos, whose religion is not put on for one day of the week, like their Sunday clothes.

"Tell McG—— to try to imagine what his sensations would be with his curved beak hooked under the eye-piece of our superb twenty-inch telescope, whilst he scanned the equatorial belt and the southern constellations! . . ."

This is from a letter to the man who succeeded him in Belize:

"Observatorio de Manila, December 18, 1901.

". . . The museum at the Ateneo is a gem. Fr. S—— has a Filipino taxidermist at work there the whole year round preparing and mounting specimens, and he's a daisy. There are a dozen or more specimens of stuffed boas, one of them measuring twenty-four feet in length.

"You ask if I have found amongst the Filipinos

the equals of Goyo and Lucio for bush companions. Well, I have not had a chance to see the bush yet, and I have nothing to do with the boys at present, except to take a walk with them on recreation days through the streets of Manila and its suburbs. They always march in line, two or three abreast, and I tell you they make a natty appearance in their trim uniforms, spotless white trousers, snug-fitting dark blue jackets with gilt buttons, and dark blue cap trimmed in gold. They usually go in bands of about a hundred or a hundred and fifty. Of course *we* always wear the cassock, and are marks on the street. I'd give a farm to be able to take an occasional stroll, barefooted, along the shore where the waves roll in from the bay, as we could do at Stann Creek or outside Belize, or take a decent sprint along the roads without being wrapped up from head to feet in a long cassock and manteo. The waters of Manila Bay are tossing scarcely more than a stone's throw away, and on Thursdays at our villa the deep Pasig runs directly before our door; yet I have not had a swim since I left the incomparable Waikiki beach near Honolulu. But this is Manila, not Missouri or Belize. . . . What a dull world this would be if we all had the same ideas! . . .

"On the feast of St. Francis Xavier the patron of the Normal School, the boarders gave a play, entitled St. Stanislaus, in the open patio. The stage setting was fine, the costumes rich, and the acting of the young Filipinos very creditable; the only thing to mar the effect was the absence of foot-lights, which left the faces of the actors three times as dark as they naturally are. After the whole affair, when the crowd had dispersed, the band kept on playing till late in the night;

so we had up a number of the boys to go through various native and Spanish dances. I must say that the popular Spanish dance is the most beautiful thing of its sort I have ever witnessed. None of our American dances can come near it for grace.

". . . We have had two quakes to-day, but very slight ones. But I may tell you right here that in the Philippines terra firma is a misnomer. Our microseismometers at the Observatory show that we are never still here.

". . . We have land snails here in Mindanao which live in the tops of trees and have shells as big as your fist and beautifully coloured. Among the bivalves in the sea down about Tacloban lives the *Tridacna gigas,* measuring more than three feet across and weighing hundreds of pounds. I have seen a number of such specimens, but of course they are not easy to get hold of.

". . . How is the Honduras Club? Hope it isn't raided too often! I don't imagine it would flourish in this climate."

To his aunt, Mrs. Siedekum, he writes on February 7, 1902:

". . . Affairs in the Philippines are in a very mixed up state, politically, materially, and religiously. Although organized resistance is over, fighting is still going on in several of the provinces, and I am convinced that there can be no permanent peace for years to come. The natives who have submitted cannot be trusted; unless a garrison is at hand there is fear of an uprising at any time. They dream only of inde-

pendence, but I feel sure that if it were given them in the near future, the country would return to perfect savagery; for the Filipino without the softening and civilizing influence of religion is the worst of savages.

"The Filipinos were a happy and contented people until a few natives educated in Europe returned without faith or morals and began founding secret lodges of the terrible society known as the Katipunan. Nearly all the natives are simple, good Catholics, with the exception of a few dozens of renegades who constitute 'The Federal Party.' Here in Manila the natives are becoming corrupted by contact with the American soldier, and are no longer as decent as they were a few years ago.

"There are two important American papers published here in Manila, both rabidly anti-Friar and anti-Catholic. The most outrageous calumnies, lies and exaggerations, are daily printed about the Friars. These papers are worse than any A.P.A. sheet I ever laid eyes on, and of course the secular papers in the States take their news from such sources. They are not only bigoted but densely ignorant of everything connected with the Catholic Religion. Still, and it seems strange, there is never a word said against the Jesuits. We are running the entire Weather Bureau of the archipelago, and outside of the five fathers and myself all the other observers here and throughout the islands are native Filipinos trained here in the Observatory.

"Our Government has forced its irreligious public school system on the Filipinos, but everywhere the Catholics are opening private Catholic schools, and as these are opened the public schools become empty and

the Catholic schools filled, since the natives do not care to have their children brought up as atheists. Many young women have come here from the States to teach school. . . . The Philippines are no place for a decent unmarried American woman.

" Our soldiers are now following the reconcentrado plan in the disturbed provinces, notwithstanding the fact that they could not find words strong enough to curse it with when the ' cruel Spaniards ' followed the same plan. They are burning the towns in the districts and forcing the natives to gather along the telegraph lines or be treated as traitors. The troops, both officers and men, are tired of war and anxious to get home, for war in a country and climate like this is a more than ordinarily terrible thing. What the outcome will be, it is hard to see just now. One officer said to me, ' I wish to God Dewey had never seen Manila ! '

" The American Government has a white elephant on its hands, and naturally doesn't know what to do with it. It is costing millions of money and thousands of lives — and still there is no end in sight. The Filipino people are undoubtedly unable to govern themselves; if left to themselves would revert to savagery and constant tribal warfare. Spain never did subdue them by force of arms. It was the Christian influence of the Spanish missionaries that won these Malays, and then protected them from the injustice of grasping and unscrupulous governors. They made of them a peaceful, happy, Christian people, who continued so until they were stirred up a few years ago by the secret lodges led blindly by a few crafty educated men, many of whom are now receiving fat salaries in the employ of

the American Government whilst at the same time secretly helping the insurgents. They are men who would sell their own mothers or fathers for a handful of gold; and they are the men who are crying for the expulsion of all the religious orders from the islands. . . .

"Of course the greatest noise is made about the immorality of the friars. Now the truth is that, just as in the States we have a few sacrilegious 'ex-priests' and 'ex-nuns' who have been a disgrace to their calling, so also in the Philippines a few unfortunate men have proved unfaithful to their vows, a disgrace to themselves, and a scandal to the Church and their neighbour. But to accuse the friars, as a body, of immorality, is as unjust as it would be to accuse the American clergy of unfaithfulness on account of the bad lives of their 'ex-priests.' There was a Judas amongst the Apostles; there will probably be Judases until the judgment day; for the devil does his utmost of course to destroy God's chosen souls. And the enemies of the Church are almost insanely eager to make the most of such scandals as do happen."

To a class-mate in St. Louis, on February 17, 1902:

". . . At present there is nothing very exciting going on. Since the establishment of 'The Philippine Weather Bureau' by our Government, a 'Crop Service' has become an essential part of its work. Although I always have been something of a 'hayseed' and a wild man of the bush, I never dreamed of running a farm, a threshing machine, or a Crop Service.

Yet here I am, looking after the 'Crop Service' of the Philippine Islands and studying economic entomology. Bugs, Bugs, Bugs! Little bugs, big bugs, every bug that takes a bite at the crops of the Islands, have all been handed over to my tender mercies. . . .

". . . The theological department is of course going along quietly and unostentatiously at the same time. I am on friendly terms with Perrone and Sabetti. I passed my Second Volume around Christmas, and expect to pass 'ad audiendas' about the end of the present month.

"The scholastic year closes here on March 9, on which day the 'Normal' will have its exhibition and distribution. I have three young Filipinos in training for a little comedy sketch in English which I have scribbled for the occasion. A few weeks ago we had the quarterly public disputation of the philosophy class at the Ateneo, when the natives defended their theses in ontology and ethics very ably against all comers; and all in *Latin,* remember! I am afraid the philosophers in our Missouri colleges would feel rather small if they ran up against our 'savages' in such a contest. The course at the Ateneo is certainly very complete, and their A.B. is given only after a *second* year of philosophy. . . .

". . . The press and the Protestant ministers are doing their best to pervert the faith of the poor people here. But what is true of the Latin races, is true all the world over of the Indian tribes who have received the true faith at their hands: you may succeed in making bad Catholics of them, but you can never make them Protestants. I have heard that the Protestants are making reports of great numbers of converts in

the American papers; but it is only a repetition of their old tactics — it's all a big, big lie. The ministers make a great noise advertising their services, and preach before a couple of dozen lazy *cocheros* and *muchachos* who are lounging around trying to kill time and drop in to see what is going on. Protestant bibles are distributed, and a grand report sent back to the missionary and bible societies at home who are supplying the millions. In the meantime the *cochero* strolls off, and rolls his cigarettes with leaves from the bibles, starts his fire to boil his rice, or puts them to more ignominious uses. . . .

"The great day is coming along pretty rapidly, old man, so don't forget to pray hard for the solitary one in the far east."

From a letter to another scholastic in St. Louis, March 3:

". . . Fr. S—— and I, a few weeks ago, went over across the Bay to the famous Cavite, to look after the establishment of a meteorological station. We passed within arm's length of the rusting skeletons of the Spanish ships which Dewey sent to the bottom. There are two of our Fathers in the town taking the place of the friars who have decamped to Manila. Whilst looking for the Fathers' residence, we entered one of the deserted churches and the attached monastery. Talk about your desolation of desolations! nothing but the solid walls, roof, and stone partitions left; everything else smashed or carried away, even the stone slabs of the pavement. But the convent itself was not deserted, not by any means. It was filled with filth and

a couple of hundred Indians living in the friars' rooms, several families in each room, and at least half a dozen cocks in each, tied to the various articles of rubbish. The rest of the description I must prudently omit, merely remarking that Saturdays at the mouth of Stann Creek couldn't begin to compare with the interior of that convent. . . . The Carib is very tame alongside of the Filipino! But don't imagine I have gone back on the Caribs — even though the future Fr. K. will take good care of them. Do oranges still disappear from sick men's rooms? If so, tell Patrick the Broad-backed that we have three or four dozen orange trees in our garden here; let him come over. Has Mankato Bill finished his 'morals' yet? and is it true that the Count has shrieked all the remaining hairs off his head when assisting you in stringing wires? . . .

"Glad to hear Mr. B. has taken my place in defending our much-maligned mahogany mission. Truth is bound to prevail in the end. But here's something on the quiet which you must tell Phil (of course not whilst any of the scoffers at Belize are around). I was piloting through the Observatory, a few weeks ago, the captain of an English First-Class Cruiser and the Chief Justice of one of His Majesty's colonies. One of the gentlemen, I found, thought that Belize was *somewhere* in South America, the other that it was the same as British Guiana!!!!!

"I had a letter from Fr. H. the other day, from China, saying that as yet he has received no orders to prepare for Manila. It's a great pity; there is not a single American priest in the whole archipelago, outside of three or four chaplains who are of course 'hik-

ing' with their soldier boys. English-speaking priests for the ministry are sadly needed here at present, whilst unfortunately there are some dozens of 'preachers' trying to pervert the natives; not however in parts where there is danger to life and limb, but in comfortable quarters here in Manila or other safe domiciles. . . .

". . . If you happen to run across anything interesting on bugs, just send it along, for as you may know, I have charge of the 'Crop Service' of the Weather Bureau, and am up to my ears in the economic entomology of the Philippines. *Bugs* do come in handy sometimes, after all — who would imagine it!

"Well, adios! for the present. Greetings to all the brethren especially to the stand-bys of the 'Club.' And don't forget *the old Carib* in your prayers, especially as the end of the year draws near.

"P.S. I must not forget a most extraordinary event. I had a breakfast this morning, the first since my arrival in Manila. I am sure you sympathize with me. Our usual so-called breakfast consists of coffee and dry bread; but this morning we celebrated the end of the school year luxuriously with real beefsteak, eggs, fried *chippies,* (real chippies, you needn't laugh!) and bananas. We had a chippy hunt the night before, the muchachos climbing up under the eaves of the porch and catching them in their nests. You must come to Manila if you want a chippy breakfast. It seems we are going to have another hunt in a few days. From what I hear, this is the chief exercise and entertainment of the scholastics, too, in vacations. Our Meramec trips and similar violent exercises of a Missouri vacation are eminently unfitted for monks

who never take off their habits — though their garb underneath would be just the thing for field-day sports."

From a letter to his sister, on March 12, 1902:

". . . The climate does not bother me in the least. It can't come near Belize for heat; though I have only passed through the coolest part of the year and we are just approaching the worst part, April and May, when Manila is said to be stifling hot. But even then, as I see from the figures given, the temperature and moisture does not reach that of Belize, so I guess I am safe.

" As for my work, I may say first that I am finishing privately my theological studies in preparation for the priesthood, and with the Lord's help I hope to be ordained some time in June or July. Of course you will hear from me before then, however. At the same time I am one of the assistant directors of the Observatory. This has the reputation throughout the world of being the best equipped meteorological and seismical observatory to be found anywhere. There are four different departments, all perfectly equipped; the magnetic, astronomic, seismic, and meteorologic, the last two being the most practically important. There are six of our Fathers, besides myself, at the head of the different sections, and about thirty or thirty-five assistant Filipino observers here at the Manila Observatory. We have some thirty-two auxiliary stations scattered about the archipelago, where our observers (all Filipinos trained under our Fathers here at Manila) send in their reports by telegraph several times a day. The principal work is in the weather

forecasts and predictions of the terrible typhoons that are almost continually passing over some part or other of the islands and the neighbouring seas. The warnings are sent by the Observatory to all points connected by telegraph and cable in the islands and neighbouring ports of Indo-China, China, and Japan. This work had been going on for many years before the war, and under the new regime the U. S. Government, anxious to profit by the admirable system and work carried on by our Fathers, has made an arrangement with the Observatory, constituting it the official Philippine Weather Bureau. We give the Government the result of our scientific work, and it in turn stands all the expense of carrying on the system and pays salaries to the employees and observers and directors. It is, however, independent of the Civil Service Bureau. Fr. Algue is the head of the whole system, and he is responsible only to the Philippine Commission.

". . . Pray fervently that the Almighty may spare us all till that day when, though most unworthy of such a grace, I may be able, as the Lord's annointed, to lay my consecrated hands on your heads and call down God's best blessings on all of you, the nearest and dearest on this earth."

On March 31, he writes to a class-mate in St. Louis:

". . . I am glad you found that letter interesting, bearing the postmark 'Oct.' and dated 'Nov. Nov. Nov.' I sent three letters about the same time, all dated November, and realized the fact only several days afterward; I shall not attempt to explain the discrepancy.

"Well, Lent and Holy Week, with its religious processions, etc., are all over. The Lent part didn't affect me, for as I told you before, we keep perpetual Lent here so far as breakfast is concerned. I am always as hungry as a wolf before dinner comes around. I thought I would get used to the regime, but I must confess that, though it does not interfere with my work, I *feel* it just as much to-day as I did the first day of my arrival. No doubt it all depends on one's 'raisin'". The processions through the streets during Holy Week and the devotion of the people at services were most edifying.

"To-day the professors at the Ateneo and the Normal go out to the villa at Sta. Ana, to begin their long vacations. Their supreme enjoyment and recreation there is playing dominoes. . . . The brother clothes-keeper has just brought me my bathing suit for Sta. Ana. I think I told you already about the one he brought me for bathing in the tub here at home. With the present thing on and with the rope attachment around the belly, I imagine I would make a good anchor for the raft at Beulah. . . . I guess I shall have to try the experiment, but I don't anticipate any great exhilaration from the proceeding, and think a couple of days at the villa will fulfill all my obligations of courtesy. I prefer the Observatory grounds and the shower bath here at home. Dominoes and ropes are rather indigestible. Here at home I shall try to prepare in my own poor way for ordination, Deo volente.

"The exact day of my ordination is not yet determined. When it is settled, I shall let you know immediately. I begin to feel smaller and smaller as the

time draws near, but I hope the Lord will not reject me entirely. The American Catholics here, especially the young men, are looking forward impatiently for the day. They are asking for me as their director or chaplain. Great heavens! how small I do feel! It gives me the shivers.

"The English-speaking dailies of Manila are still continuing their crusade against the friars and the Church. They are getting ranker and ranker every day, and there is not a word said in reply which can reach the ears of the English-speaking population. For these latter never read the Spanish papers. It's a great pity we have no Catholic English organ here. . . . Finally Superiors gave me a chance to write something. The difficulty was to get it in the papers. I sent it to three; one, which had it in for the others, printed it. And then there was some fun.

"A comment of the editor accompanied the 'Protest,' and this stirred up some of the Irish blood of the capital. A few hours after the paper appeared, some warm-blooded Celts bearded the editor in his den, and as one of them expressed it, 'we simply gave him hell!' They proved him to his face a liar three times over, proved he didn't know a friar from a corn-cob, asked him for some Catholic authorities for certain statements he had made. The editor told them he had a Catholic in the office itself, who knew all about the friars and the Catholic Church. 'Trot him out, and let's see what he looks like.' He ushered in a low-browed Portugee who said he was a Catholic and had lived eight years in the house of a friar with three women. But the Portugee was in for a bad time. They made him admit he hadn't been to Mass or the

St. Benedict School

Sacraments in the last eleven years, that his friar was no friar at all, but a miserable Filipino renegade, that he himself was a d—— liar and libertine, etc. They wound up by telling the editor again what they thought of him and his Catholic authorities, that they had his measure taken and his whole past record and that of his gang, and that they would show him up and run him out of Manila. It was all rather violent, but interesting.

" The chief spokesman on the occasion was a certain O—— who had come out as inspector of schools. He is gathering a lot of facts with regard to the Protestant propaganda carried on in the public school system here. As you may have heard, four out of five superintendents here are Protestant ministers. O—— is finding out too much here in Manila . . . he has been assigned to the island of Bohol, where he can't see anything or do any damage. Amongst all the public school teachers in Manila there is not a single Catholic man, and only two girls — who, of course, don't count. The Catholic school teachers who come from the States have been quietly shipped to the provinces, out in the bush, where they can't see what is going on in the capital, or be an obstacle to the propagation of the ' pure gospel ' of liberty with which the grand Republic of Freedom is blessing the benighted Filipino.

". . . By the way, paulo majora canamus. Fr. Algue has just brought me in two cigars. They are what are called family cigars. Don't imagine I am trying to tell you a fish story; these are actual facts. Each cigar by actual measurement is two feet, one and a half inches, long; a little over two inches in diameter at the far end, half an inch diameter at the other.

The modus operandi is as follows: The cigar is strung up at a convenient height in some corner of the house. The first one up in the morning lights the big end and puffs away until he is tired. The other members of the family, or friends coming in, go over and take a whack at it as long as they please whenever they find it free. It generally lasts during the whole day. Wouldn't the Count have a great time working out his combination of strings and wires on such a subject.

"You have probably seen in the papers before now that the cholera has broken out in Manila. No doubt about it, and in its most malignant form. The victims drop off within three or four hours after being attacked. Up to the present only one white man has been attacked; all the others have been natives or Chinese. Very stringent measures have been adopted by the sanitary department and there is good hope of keeping it in check. Several of the infected districts have been burnt to the ground; the whole city is under strict quarantine. Nevertheless it has already spread to Cavite, Balanga, and Malolos. The authorities have stamped out the bubonic plague, and we hope the same will be done with the present pest, which came from some one of the Chinese ports; yet it will be a more difficult matter.

"I hope I shall be ordained about the same time as you in St. Louis. I am sorry I am missing the Rites Class and other good helps of the theologate. There will probably be some brown-skinned Filipinos ordained with me, so I shall feel right at home so far as colour is concerned. Don't forget the old Carib in your prayers."

June 15, 1902.

". . . Nearly every letter I have had in the last six months asks about the date of my ordination. Well, at the present date, June 15, I haven't the slightest idea! I had been looking forward to this event taking place toward the end of this month, at least about the same date as that of my compañeros in St. Louis, but now I guess not. Superiors here must wait for the word from the Prov. at St. Louis, and so far that word is not forthcoming. You see, I am in the far, far East, on the other side of the world. I still have hopes something may turn up before St. Ignatius' day — vamos a ver! Or perhaps after the informations have come in about Buck Stanton's career during the last fifteen years, from north, south, east and west, superiors may judge here that he needs to brush up his spiritual furniture for a year or two longer, and to get over his inveterate worldly habits, such as sitting with his legs crossed and combing his hair. But no doubt the Lord will bring things around in their proper time, and no need to worry.

" (Monday morning, 9:30) — Ca . . . nastos! have just shot a 'lectio brevis' at my little brown brothers. We never know what's ahead of us. When I stepped out of my last class in Belize I thought my magisterium was over for good and aye. But lo! here I am professor of English in the higher classes of the famous Escuela Normal de S. Xavier de Manila. My present disciples are somewhat older than my charges at Belize, but run pretty much through the same range of colours, barring however both white and black. Of course my opening speech was entirely in Spanish, as my future Aguinaldos are scarcely yet able to

wrestle with English as she is spoke. But in a couple of months I hope we shall be able to dispense with most of the Spanish, for they are ravenous for English.

"We have about two thousand boys at the two schools here, nearly six hundred of them boarders. Our Fathers say that if we had room and men, we should easily get between three and four thousand pupils. It is wonderful what confidence the Filipino has in Jesuit teaching: the tradition goes down through generations. As soon as the boys of the family begin to wear trousers (ten years or thereabouts), they are shipped off to the Padres de la Compania, los Jesuitas, and generally they go right through the course. If some of them have cabbage heads, the parent says: 'Well, never mind; they must go to the Fathers just the same. They will make good civilized Christians out of them and gentlemen, and that is the most important thing for this world and the next.' This is quoted almost literally from a letter received yesterday by the Rector from a man who now has three sons here. Nine boys of the same family have already gone through our colleges, and the father writes that he has three smaller ones at home whom he will send, 'with God's help,' as soon as they are old enough! (They are good Catholic families here: like the Irish; twelve to fifteen children are common.)

"Up to a month ago all our 'American' newspapers of Manila were rabidly anti-Catholic, anti-friar, anti-Filipino, anti-Spanish, anti-all-morals. The two principal dailies are fairly well run down. The editors of two others were brought up and convicted of 'sedition.' A third has sold out and is now in other hands. It looks as if we were finally to have a couple of decent

daily papers. A new clean little weekly has lately shown up, of which I am sending a few copies. From these you will see that the tide is beginning to turn.

"I get 'the most widely read newspaper in Central America' regularly from Stanley, and an occasional letter from Bro. Dan, so that I keep in touch with Belize. I am sorry to hear that there is danger of the college going by the board. But my Mayas and Caribs will always be on deck, and I hope to be ready for them in a short time. . . . What has become of my famous invincible 'Columbian Crew'? Oh, for a good pull at the oars or a dive into limpid waters! But alas! we don't engage in such worldly pastimes here. Do you remember our five mile pull from the 'Haul-over' against Willie Price and Stolf? and our row out to Spanish Caye on New Year's eve? How I wish you were here for a day, so that we might slip off to the woods and get lost, as we did that day back of Stann Creek with Magdaleno for our guide!"

In a sense, these letters need no interpretation. Scattered through nearly a year, they indicate roughly the wide variety of his occupations. Yet one would scarcely gather from them how intensely active Stanton was during that time. With characteristic modesty he says nothing at all of his decidedly striking achievements in the field of science. It is almost incredible to find from the records of the Smithsonian Institution at Washington that, in the midst of a lot of other work, he discovered sixty-

seven new varieties of hymenopterous insects, of which one genus and eight species have been named after him. That would be rather a proud record for a man who could devote uninterrupted years to the sole work of collecting and investigating. He wrote monographs on "Insects Affecting the Crops in the Philippines," in connection with his "Crop Service." He made interesting and valuable researches in botany. With all this, and with a great deal of routine work in the observatory, he had a large task of smoothing, rather unofficially, the relations between the Government executives and the Fathers in charge of the Observatory. And he still found time for a multitudinous correspondence, of which the few extracts just quoted can give but the most meagre idea.

It would almost be worth while printing that correspondence in full, to have it show how completely self-effacing Stanton was, and to show how the purpose and hope of working for others dominated him. If his work was in science, his dreams were all of souls. To study "bugs" amused him: to do good to his fellow-men was his supreme inspiration. But I have no intention of treating this period of his life fully. It will suffice for my purpose to have given a sufficient outline of it to fill in the general view.

CHAPTER VIII

On August 10, 1902, Stanton was ordained priest, in the private chapel of the Archbishop of Manila. He was in his thirty-third year, and had been fifteen years in the Society. How the expectation of that day had coloured all his thoughts through those years! His letter to his sister, written on the day after his first Mass, is inexpressibly touching in its simple feeling; but it is too sacred for public perusal. He was awed, but not frightened. The faith that made him wonder at God's astonishing condescension, gave him courage to accept the great gift and the great responsibility with perfect simplicity. The whole affair was too big to prose about it. It was all God's doing, and he could only be quietly grateful that God had picked him out, a little pawn, for such a move in the Great Game.

His ordination was very quiet, without any public display. The little regret that none of his family could be present was swallowed up in the immensity of the fact that he was now "a priest forever." His mind leaped out at once to his new duties, his

new, wonderful opportunities. It was a consummation, the crown of years of efforts: but not a time for "Nunc Dimitis," rather for the cry of the heart, "Here am I, send me!" It was for this that he had become a Jesuit, for this that he had made sacrifices: to work for others, to be God's minister to needy men.

And very swiftly God sent him to His work. There was a little breathing-spell, a little delay for human congratulations. There was a great Solemn Mass at La Ermita, "the American church"; with the Army Chaplains as his assistants; before a great crowd of notables, American and Filipino; with the music of a full orchestra of eighty pieces, and exquisite singing. There were receptions in his honour, and no end of gifts, testimonials, addresses, what-not. The Manila papers flared—"The first American priest ordained in Manila"—"A new era for Catholicity in the Philippines!" and so forth, But in a few days he was back at his post at the Observatory, with the new tasks, the most satisfying tasks, of a priest.

The cholera still raged. Fr. McKinnon, the resident Army Chaplain in Manila, sickened and died. Fr. Stanton's work multiplied. He gives some de-

tails in the course of a letter to a comrade in St. Louis.

". . . With the death of Fr. McKinnon, I was left the only English-speaking priest in Manila. The day he fell sick, just during the height of the cholera, I was hurried out on an emergency call to a poor Kentucky negro dying of the pest. I got there in time to confess him and give him the last anointing before he died. You see, I seem fated for the niggers, or at least for the coloured folk of one kind or another. The following night I was called again, at 2:30 a.m., this time for two poor Irish teamsters in the same fix as the nigger, and with the help of the Lord I got them ready for the next world. After that work came swiftly indeed.

"Sunday came, and I had to take Fr. McKinnon's place and look after the American congregation in Ermita church, with mass and sermon at 9:30. I know it is contrary to all the books and the counsels of the elders for a young, inexperienced priest to get up and attempt to preach the word of God without very careful preparation, even in writing, but with my Observatory work and my class and my sick I was glad enough to have time even to read over the Gospel of the day before Mass on the morning itself: writing was hopelessly out of the question. When cholera is abroad, taking off poor fellows with three or four hours' notice, and you find yourself the only pebble on the beach, all things cannot be done according to the books.

"After the cholera had almost completely disappeared amongst the civilian whites, it broke out amongst the soldiers, and had carried off sixteen of

the poor boys in the pest hospital before I knew anything about it. The worst of it was that I found about two-thirds of the names were Irish. I hurried down immediately, and found twenty-seven boys, seventeen of whom were Catholics. I got confessions from every one of them and, with one exception, without any difficulty. This exception was a strawberry blonde like Your Reverence, and answered to the euphonious name of Kennedy. He told me he was not a Catholic and that I could not do anything for him. I asked him where he had stolen his name. Within ten minutes I had him on his knees — metaphorically, to be sure — and before I left him he too had made his peace with his Maker and was ready to appear before the Source of all mercy.

" My hospital work, though not specially exhilarating physically after a full day's work in the Observatory, I found truly most consoling. The looks with which I am greeted on my first appearance at any of the American hospitals are anything but encouraging; for with my cassock I am, of course, invariably taken as one of those d—— friars. But I no sooner make myself known than I am treated with the greatest consideration by officials, nurses, and men, and am given a free fling.

" When the cholera subsided in the city I began to round up some of the soldier boys in their quarters. One instance may be interesting. Mr. Brown, the English scholastic recently arrived, and myself started for a walk in the outskirts of Manila, looking for something to turn up. We missed our way, and found ourselves at nightfall in sight of a village of natives about four miles from the city. The streets were alive with

thousands of natives who seemed to speak nothing but Tagalo and were wondering what the two 'frailes' were after. I managed, however, after a little search, to hit the right road to Manila, and found it led to just what I was looking for, the Pasay Barracks. It was late, and we had no time to lose. As we were hurrying along in the moonlit road near the quarters, I overheard the remark from a group in a roadside *tienda,* 'What-in-the-hell kind of friars are those, talking English?' Just then two of the boys turned suddenly in their tracks, started down the road ahead of us, and waited in the shadow of a clump of bamboo. As we neared them, they came out into the moonlight, doffed their hats, and one of them blurted out: 'Father, we heard you speaking English. You're the first priest we have heard speak English since we have been out here, and we'd like very much if you could arrange to give a lot of us boys a chance to go to our duties.'

"I told them they were just the chaps I was looking for. I learned from them that in their battery, out of a hundred and four men who came out from the States, one hundred were Catholics. They came from New York, and my two friends answered to the names, Tom Burke and Bill Madden. I told them I would try to make arrangements for next Sunday, and sent them away happy, to drum up their companions.

"The Post comprises three batteries of artillery and seven cavalry companies. During the week I called on the Commandant, told him who I was and what I wanted. He was not a Catholic, and there was a Protestant Chaplain at the Post, and the Post had in the meantime been quarantined; but notwithstanding

these facts, he told me with the greatest courtesy that he would issue a general order on Saturday morning, advising all the men that those who wished to attend my 'service' might take out passes for Saturday evening (3 to 6 o'clock) and Sunday morning (8 to 11 o'clock). He wished the boys had a chance oftener to have the services of an American Catholic priest.

"For the edification of the natives, I preferred to use the church of the town a mile or so distant, rather than say Mass in the Post; for the Filipino looks on all Americanos as heathens — and you can't blame them much, either. Saturday afternoon, a band of about fifty of the boys marched to the church under the command of Sergeant O'Donnell. The gallant Sergeant said that he had rounded up the present crowd, and that more would come later, but that he could not go to confession himself to-day, as it had been seven years since he had been to his duties, and he was not ready, Father, and he would go some other time, Father, etc. etc. 'No, no, old man; that won't do at all. You must give the example to your men.' And in the end I just took him quietly by the arm, and we marched into the church and to the confessional. The others say he came out radiant, and persuaded quite a number of them, who had simply taken out passes to get out of quarantine and who were in the same fix as he, to clean up their scores. Before they left every last one had been to confession, and you never saw a happier set of boys as they marched back to barracks.

"In the morning before Mass I heard some more confessions. Then, when the church was cleared of natives after their last Mass, about 9:30, I celebrated for my soldier boys. The doors, windows, and rear

portion of the church were crowded with astonished natives, taking in the unusual sight. There are no pews in these churches, you know, and the body of uniformed Americans *kneeling* on the floor during nearly the whole Mass was a revelation to the Filipinos, who, except at the consecration, stand during Mass, the women squatting on the floor, the babies rolling around indiscriminately from one place to another. Their wonder grew when they saw our boys walk up to the communion rail with hands folded and eyes cast down in all reverence, as we are accustomed to do at home; whereas here the men, when they do go (a rare occurrence, so far as my experience goes), approach and return from the rail nonchalantly, very much as men walk about the public streets of our cities. But our standards of reverence in many ways seem to be different.

"Another hit seems to have been made by my acolytes, the redoubtable Sergeant O'Donnell and Corporal Kelly, who served the Mass in full uniform and went through their parts like professed members of the Holy Family Altar Boys Society. The native Padre was himself very much impressed by the conduct of the boys, and took occasion from their example to preach a lesson to his own people. During the Mass I gave them a few words 'appropriate to the occasion,' and after Mass sent them back light-hearted to their barracks with the promise of another chance to clean up their books before a great while. . . .

"Excuse the interruption. I expected to give you an account of a couple of my trips through the provinces, but I find I have no time. In a few minutes I

shall have to be packing my grip for an inspection of the meteorological stations in the Sulu archipelago, Jolo, Mindanao, and other southern islands. I start to-morrow on the 'Hai-Mun.' So, hasta luego, old fellow."

His work as a priest in Manila was really considerable. In addition to acting as a sort of unofficial chaplain to the soldiers, he kept on in charge of the Ermita church and so was thrown into contact with the fairly large body of American Catholics in the city. And with all he made himself felt almost immediately. The "boys" delighted in him, welcomed him at once with the utmost goodfellowship and with complete confidence. More than one Army officer has testified to the immense influence he had over them. It is safe to say that during his time there were very few Catholic soldiers in Manila who did not practise their religion edifyingly. He was all priest, but he had no clerical pose; nor, on the other hand, had he any cheap tricks of an affected camaraderie. With a quiet, natural dignity, with perfect good-humour, and with the absolute simple sincerity which was native to him, he came amongst them as God's representative and they received him as such. He could chaff them without sacrificing at all his priestly character; and

he could talk very bluntly to them without being even suspected of scolding.

Nor was his influence less in the wider field of the civilians. How he met all the demands on his time from these, in the midst of his other occupations, is matter for wonder. It is not astonishing that we have fewer letters of this period; the marvel being rather that he should find time to write any. He was, in a short time, one of the best-known men in Manila, as much respected and loved amongst the official and educated classes as amongst his "boys" at the barracks. And withal he found time to look after the needs of some of the Filipino people. There was an American Normal School in Manila, established by the Government for Filipino girls. These girls, living in a dormitory under charge of an excellent American woman, a Protestant, were very keen to be Americanized. They asked Fr. Stanton if they might go to a Protestant church, as they wished to have their religious instruction in English. With no little difficulty, he arranged to give them instruction and catechism classes himself: the Governor General, himself a Catholic, insisting that each Catholic girl should secure a written request for such instruction from her parents. The work still continues.

Then, he had to go on long tours of inspection through the Islands, in his meteorological work. And here too he is always the priest. Whatever time he could properly spare from his scientific duties was given to helping the natives, who in many instances were sorely in need of help. Almost any letter on these tours, taken at random, will show how eager and how successful was his activity. As an instance, he writes to his aunt, on February 20, 1903:

" Zamboanga, Mindanao, P. I.

". . . I just arrived yesterday from the island of Jolo in the Sulu Archipelago. This is the stronghold of the Moros in these parts and the residence of the Sultan. But in the town there are, besides the American soldiers, a few hundred Christian Filipinos. There is no priest, so I was kept busy baptizing babies born since the last time they had seen a priest, which was nearly a year ago. These poor people kept me occupied up to the very moment I had to board the steamer for Zamboanga. Jolo is about five degrees north of the equator, almost in sight of Borneo, and some eight hundred miles from Manila.

" Zamboanga, where I am now, is a beautiful, well-shaded town, full of coconut groves and lovely trees, and is the military headquarters for the southern islands. Saturday and Sunday I shall give the soldiers a chance to go to their religious duties. The poor fellows are here, some of them for years, without hav-

ing had a chance to speak to a priest who could understand them.

"To-morrow morning I go to the island of Basilan, another island of Moros, where there are some troops, and where I shall have some scientific work and also some work for souls. . . ."

In the meanwhile, the work at the Observatory increased, owing to the absence of some of the directors. Then Fr. Stanton was appointed confessor to the boys at the Normal School. He welcomed a week's rest at the villa, and took advantage of the respite to go out and capture a live boa-constrictor. He writes to St. Louis:

"Manila Observatory, June 23, 1903.

"Salutations from the Pearl of the Orient to all the crowd! A short time ago I spent a week's vacation at Santa Ana, where I passed the time pleasantly, burning Manila weeds and diving under dead carabaos and certain other smaller but no less interesting floaters in the simmering waters of the tortuous Pasig. The river hereabouts would in some respects run a close second to the Chicago River, though it is infinitely more picturesque. But at present I am head and heels in work, since the staff has been reduced by the departure of the two that have sailed for the States. . . .

". . . Enclosed you will find a paragraph from the *Manila Cablenews,* which you may find interesting and which will remind you of days gone by. I have the beast in training and have just regaled him with a

morsel of one rat and two cats — alive, of course. He slid them down nicely and asked for more. He is a bit too strenuous for one man to handle, and not over-affectionate as yet; for the other day, when an hombre and myself were giving him some exercise, the hombre grabbed the beast's tail before I was aware of it, and the beast himself managed to comb the back of my left hand with his upper jaw. The by-standers were horrified, of course, to see the blood running, but I am still alive and kicking.

"Exceptionally hot weather just now — rainy season a month late, and not in sight yet. Both colleges larger than last year. For want of accomodations we had to refuse more than *two hundred* applications as boarders at the Normal, and more than *three hundred* at the Ateneo. It was rather amusing to hear the parents say, when told that there was not a single bed vacant: 'Oh, that is nothing, Father. Let the boys sleep anywhere, on the floor, in the kitchen, with the cats and chickens; they sleep anywhere; only please take them in; they have never slept on a bed in their lives!'

". . . We have just heard of the appointment of Fr. Harty as Archbishop of Manila. Would to God he may come soon, to begin to put some order in the chaos now reigning. But if he is not an extraordinary man, he will either give up in disgust or be put in an insane asylum before he lives here long and tries to do his duty.[1] I pity the poor man who comes."

[1] Archbishop Harty did *not* give up in disgust, *did not* retire to an asylum, but remained thirteen years and *did* his duty. I think Fr. Stanton would have been particularly glad to let this sentence stand, and with it the historic conclusion

It was all good work, and it was very interesting work; though of course, like all work, it had its monotonous side too. Yet there is an exultation about the work of a priest that perhaps no other work in the world has. He wields a tremendous power, the power indeed of God, his Master: and at times he is jolted out of the rut of whatever monotony may lay hold upon him, by the astounding effects of that power. Many a young priest loses his head temporarily in the beginning of his ministry, and is poured out like water; he makes us think of the disciples who came back to our Lord after their first mission, all excited, crying out, "Lord, in thy name we have cast out devils, and healed the sick!"—and of the quiet rebuke that Jesus gave them. Well, it is a pardonable fault, if it do not become permanent.

Fr. Stanton too felt the thrill of his priestly work, and exulted in the success that God gave to such efforts as he could put forth; but it did not go to his head. He had, of course, the almost extremely conservative tradition of the Society back of him, to steady him. His was an anomalous position for a Jesuit, to be thrust at once after ordination into the

that Archbishop Harty was an extraordinary man. But his extraordinariness is quite the ordinary in a Church which shirks no duty.

full tide of a priest's activity; and his letters make it clear that he discounted the fact cannily enough. He knew that ordinarily, before his real work as a priest would begin, he should have a very important special year of training to go through, which would induct him gradually into his new duties and do about as much as is humanly possible to preclude gaucheries and mistakes in their fulfilment. It was impossible, obviously, for him to enter just then upon that training. But it was only deferred, not omitted. The Society properly sets great store by what it calls its "third year of probation."

Fr. Stanton expected to leave Manila for his "third year" in the summer following his ordination. However, when this time came, the reduced condition of the staff at the Observatory necessitated another postponement. He was rather disappointed; not that he had any wild longing for a year of seclusion; but because it had to be gone through some time, and he wished to have it over — he was a normal, human man. But he did have a very sensible appreciation of the value of the "third year": an appreciation which its difficulties would, for him, not at all dim. There is a good deal of banter, but a good deal of earnestness too, in his writing to a class-mate doing his "third year" at the time:

" November 10, 1903.

". . . How I envy all you fellows the placid, etherialized atmosphere of the holy 'house of bread,' whilst here I am, the same old Buck, after fourteen years of knocking about in all four quarters of the civilized and uncivilized globe, still engaged head and heels in such vulgar, mundane occupations as signing cheques for filthy lucre, pounding away at a typewriter, and messing about amongst a lot of bugs! I hope it is not presuming to ask you to remind all the old fellows of our class, who in company with you are now regaling themselves in the rich pastures near the verdant summits of the mountains of asceticism, to breathe a silent prayer for the conversion of a poor, dull mortal grovelling down here in the dark valleys below.

" How angelic must be the olive-tinted countenance of little B——, under the sanctifying influence of dear old Florissant! And modest little T—— with his sidelong hop and dove-like demeanor, what a model the holy novices have before their eyes! And what samples of exquisite gravity they have before them, as Long John and Tommy W—— shoulder their brooms in 'manualia' or glide over the refectory floor with a trayful of dishes!" . . .

And so the letter goes on, full of chaffing; yet of something deeper than any chaffing: a man's way of saying a serious thing without blaring it.

It was settled that, when he should go to his " third year," he was to go to Spain, in order that he might incidentally perfect himself in his knowl-

edge of Spanish. He mentions this repeatedly. But he was not thinking of Spanish for the Philippines, but for his old mission in Central America. Towards the end of 1903, he writes to his successor in Belize, now at his theology in St. Louis, urging him to propose coming with him to Spain.

". . . It is the only way to learn to *speak* the language. Then we would be ready to sail together for the land of the mahogany. I think we should make a good pulling team for the backwoods of the Cayo. Of course I had expected to beat you back there by several years at least, but 'man proposes and God disposes.'"

British Honduras was still in his heart. The program was, Spain for the "third year," then back to "the bush." Another year went by in Manila, crowded with work, and the summer of 1904 came on. On May 5, he writes to his aunt:

"I have just returned from a trip to the Visayan Islands, where I have been inspecting our meteorological stations in those regions and setting up a system of typhoon signals at various ports. After my official work was done, I always managed to round up our Catholic soldiers. . . .

"Time is flying, and I am getting ready for my departure. I shall leave Manila some time between the 5th and 10th of June. I take the SS. *Mongolia* from Hongkong on June 15th. From there we go to Shanghai, thence to Japan, thence to San Francisco

by way of Honolulu. We ought to make San Francisco by the middle of July. As soon as I arrive I shall let you know whether I must go directly to St. Louis or may take a southern route and pass through San Antonio. Pray for my safe passage. . . ."

He did visit San Antonio, Texas, whither his family had removed, and then came on to the headquarters of his province, St. Louis, before setting out for Spain. The Manila episode was over.

CHAPTER IX.

I hope that no one who has become in any way interested in Fr. Stanton will skip this chapter. It will be the hardest his biographer has to write. It will be very largely unintelligible to most non-Catholics: a mere jumble of monkish foolery. But to those who understand, it may be the most significant chapter in the book. Here, if anywhere, if the author can express it at all, lies the heart of Stanton, the secret that gives meaning to what is otherwise only a commonplace life of a commonplace man, touched off with the cheap notoriety of petty travel and the superficial interest of strange places and peoples. For this chapter shall deal especially with that most elusive of all subjects, the relation of the man's soul to God.

In the early part of September, Fr. Stanton sailed from New York in the SS. *Baltic*. There were four Jesuits in the party, all bound for Spain. They travelled rather swiftly through Ireland, England, Holland, Belgium, up the Rhine to Mayence, through Switzerland, thence to Barcelona by way of

Lyons. They had enough languages in the party to carry them comfortably, and they enjoyed the trip, with Fr. Stanton as the life of the party. He reached Manresa, near Barcelona, in the beginning of October. Here, in the Spanish house of third probation, he was to spend the ensuing ten months.

A word about Manresa, before we go on to his life there. The place is, of course, inseparably linked with the memory of St. Ignatius Loyola. Here, for some eight or ten months, the Saint had lived after his "conversion," in a cave high up on the rocky face of a cliff almost overhanging the noisy little hill-stream, the Cardone, which flows through the town. Here he had written "The Spiritual Exercises." The place is sacred to his followers. The Society's house crowns the cliff, and is built down the face of it far enough to include the "holy cave," and the house is called La Santa Cueva. It is used exclusively for the young priests of the Society who are doing their last year of preparation; though its little chapel, built out along the cliff as an extension of St. Ignatius' grotto, is open to worshippers from the town. There were in the house, in Fr. Stanton's time, forty-four "tertians," as the men in their third year of probation are called: men between thirty-five and forty years

of age, and representing half a dozen nationalities.

Their life externally was very much like that of the novices; quiet, retired, with some study of the Institute of the Society; giving a short time each day to little, menial, household duties; chiefly devoted to prayer and reflection. Do not think it a gloomy life. They are cheerful bodies, the tertians; groaning whimsically at times, it is true, over their monotonous routine; looking forward often enough to the end of the year and their return to active life; but sensibly appreciative of their opportunity, with the mixture of earnestness and lightheartedness which is the stamp of the religious. Fr. Stanton entered upon that life whole-souledly. He was tremendously in earnest, as his companions testify; but he was sane and balanced as ever. He indulged in no flights of fancy or emotional extravagances. But he did pray.

What a thing that is, prayer! To talk with God! Prayer for a moment, the swift cry of the heart in need, in rejoicing — that is almost natural: "lookin' at God, and sayin' a word to Him," as an old Irishman put it. But deliberately to set one's self aside for prayer, to walk before the face of God day after day, to make a silence in one's heart where His voice may be heard — no wonder that is hard: it is al-

most terrifying. Men who pray are like those who climb high mountains, where the air is dizzyingly rare, where the lungs gasp, where the will must supplement the bodily functions to live. One gets used to it in time, as one gets used to the mountain air; and then comes the vigour and the exultation of the high country. But no metaphor touches the reality of its hardships or of its glorious strength. We must have experienced it before we can understand it. We must have known its loneliness and its desolation and its astounding comfort.

Prayer is no artificial posing, no oleaginous mouthing of pious platitudes, no windy self-communing or pharisaical self-gratulation. It is not an emotional luxury, as the world so often thinks, not an emasculate occupation, to be left to women — "for men must work, and women must weep," or pray, as they will. To all who believe in God it is a necessity, at times a dreadful necessity, fierce as battle, with the roar of unseen worlds in our ears. If it is not to be "eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow you die," then we *must* pray. If life is a fight, this is one of our chief weapons. Prayer has in it all the mystery of the world to come, and all the practicality of this world. It is the bridge be-

tween the two worlds, the ladder of Jacob, the astounding commerce of man with God.

I have no wish here to go deeply into the nature of prayer, nor to discuss the part of it that comes from God's initiative, so to speak. For the ordinary man, prayer is simply the acts of his own mind and will aided, of course, by God's ever-present grace. And ordinarily, a man needs to *grow up* before he can learn to pray well; he must have felt himself, have sensed where he fits in the scheme of creation; his faith must have been exercised in the battering of the years; he must have tasted joys, and known failure, and made mistakes, and indulged selfishness in some measure, and repented, and been buffeted. He must have learned what a broken reed he is by himself. In this sense, the prayers of inexperience are the babblings of childhood. It is the strong man only who comes with broken, humble, thrilling speech before God. Work for women! — it is almost a task for angels.

Fr. Stanton was a grown man now, a man strong in the knowledge of his own weakness. Once more, as he had done when a novice, he went through the complete Spiritual Exercises. For thirty days, in entire silence, he gave up mind and

memory and will to those simple, hard-headed, yet awful considerations: the dream that is terrifyingly practical. With the consciousness of standing naked in soul before Almighty God, he went back in thought over his life. God had made him, God had made all the world he lived in. God had given him his Christian parents, his vigour of body, his gifts of intellect and temperament, his opportunities of education, his graces, his vocation. The round earth swam before his eyes, a tiny whirling globe in the immensity of the universe: himself an infinitesimal figure crawling feebly on its surface. Yet the earth and the universe was for him. God had sent His Son here upon earth, to live, and to die, for him. God had established His hierarchical Church, undying, unchanging in truth, to shelter and guide and ward over him. God had a strange, incomprehensible happiness waiting for him. It was all most astonishing, it was humanly incredible. And its very incredibility was a mark of its truth: men could never have invented such a concept. It was the sort of thing which a man could not help accepting; yet before which, to keep his sanity, he must in some sense shrug his shoulders. It was too big to try to fathom; to accept it was enough. Besides, when one looked for a reason for it all, the reason was

still more astonishing: that God *loved* him! loved him intensely, intimately, patiently, passionately! that for all He had given, He had still infinitely more to give! that He pursued him with kindness!

To think over this day after day! to keep before his mind the comradely, human figure of Christ, who was the Infinite God — and his brother! to see himself and all the world of men through the eyes of God! How simple was the wheeling mystery of life: for it all reduced to one supreme mystery, the love of God for men. Every command was to keep men from hurting themselves, from throwing away treasures for baubles. Every thrill of human happiness was the tiny analogue of an immense happiness to come. Every pain and weariness and heartache was "the shade of His hand, outstretched caressingly." Life was the little span, the hand-breadth of waiting before the gates of eternity: and death was the gasp of the spirit before it looked upon God, the lover of souls.

Oh, it was good to live for that God, to work for Him, to help other men to see this vision! It was all so simple! Yes, it might frighten a man a little to think of venturing at all into such an incomprehensibly simple scheme. But that was God's way; He wanted men to help in it; He smiled at

their shrinking fears — and what could a man do but smile back! To do anything for Him, who had done everything for us! If only He would let him! Let him! — why, God had invited him. That was what it meant to be a Jesuit, to be a priest: to help God, to help Him spread happiness and love over the world.

A month of this, did I say? A month, when his comrades saw him constantly in the chapel, before the Blessed Sacrament — God amongst men, the Christ of Galilee hidden in a mystery; when his comrades marvelled at his entire preoccupation, at his quiet, unruffled absorption in his own thoughts? Put it down as ten months, rather. For the remaining nine months of the tertianship were only a continuation of that first. Oh, he wasn't a mystic. Nor did he go about dreaming. He shouldered his broom with the rest of them, and swept unmentionable insects out of the chapel along the cliff, and made jokes about them; and ate heartily afterwards; and went for long tramps in the hills whenever he was given a chance — and got lost, as usual, and came home late, and got a wigging; and had a family of lizards and bugs and things in his room, like the great boy that he was; and studied the technicalities of the Institute, and practised his Spanish; and was

still " Buck " Stanton. But the fire that had burned in his life deepened its glow, and he rambled and worked and chatted and laughed with the vision of Christ before him, and a hunger in his heart to do Christ's work among men. He hated religious ostentation now as much as ever; but he slipped round to the chapel the moment he was free from other duties. It is not shocking at all — quite a normal touch of human nature — to say that many of the Spaniards, with their well-merited pride of race, rather looked down upon the free and semi-heretical Yankees: not in any unpleasant way, but quite in a taken-for-granted manner, as the sons of a hundred generations in the Faith upon these offspring of yesterday in a savage land. But your Spaniard, even when a Jesuit, is a singularly honest man, and in no great time his Spanish comrades doffed their hats to Fr. Stanton's religious character. (They attributed it to his Irish ancestry.) The other Yankees were made aware of their respect; but there might have been a row if it had come to his ears.

His was a faith in God that had always been strong and clear, from boyhood; but henceforth it was to rule his life with a singular vividness and completeness. He was now a man consecrated to God's work, not with any sense of giving on his

part, but with the eagerness of one who knows that work to be a privilege. There is ordinarily a certain exaggeration in saying that a man divests himself of all selfishness; but it becomes strikingly true, when a man has so envisaged himself and all the world in their relation to God as to see no purpose really worth while except God's purpose. Then God's interests become his interests. The man seeks himself still, as he must by his very nature, but he seeks himself in God. His success is to see God's plan succeed; his delight is in the happiness that he can help to promote amongst men; his burden is the burden of all the world; and his glory is the glory of God. So Fr. Stanton learned to see and to seek, in Manresa.

It is hard to write of such things. What illuminative details we have are very sacred to the man; there is a sort of desecration in speaking of them. The effect of it all must be read in his life, blunderingly pieced together out of little acts of self-immolation. As the year went on, he had to consider what might be his actual field of endeavor for God. Fr. Algue wanted him back in Manila. His place in the Observatory was waiting for him. The work was congenial, the surroundings pleasant. There was a splendid opening for his ambition as a

scientist. He had letters from high officials, expressing the hope that he would return. He had many friends in Manila; he would enjoy excellent society; he was assured of comfortable material conditions. And withal, he could do a great deal of work for souls too. Then he thought of the Indians down in Central America, a half-civilized people, a singularly uninteresting people, not so very numerous, a small field for his activity. Prudently, he talked the matter over with one or two, asked advice of his director. He heard the usual things: men are needed in the great centers, his exceptional scientific gifts and equipment marked him out for fine work in entomology, he had the character to impress educated men and women, other less talented men might look after the Indians just as well,—he should go to Manila. You may see a good deal of what his year in Manresa was, from his conclusion in the matter.

He wrote to his provincial in St. Louis, laying the question before him. As he said in his letter, he had noticed " that our Lord, when on earth, had always had the keenest eye out for the chap who was in most need." In Manila there were plenty of priests, and others willing to go there; there was a sufficiency, if not an abundance, of money too. In

Central America there were very few priests, and not many who were willing to go; and the little mission was as poor as Job's turkey. Without any cant or show, he asked his provincial to send him to Central America. Then he sat back and waited for his decision. He had chosen according to his lights; let God do the rest.

On June 18, 1905, he wrote to his aunt:

"Cueva de San Ignacio, Manresa.

"My dearest Aunt: I received your last welcome letter in due time, but have delayed until now to answer, because I had no definite news to tell you. On Pentecost Sunday, however, I received from my provincial one of the most welcome letters I have ever received in my life. In it he tells me that it has been decided that I am destined to found a new mission in the Cayo district of British Honduras, among the abandoned tribes of Maya and Lacandon Indians there.

"What greater favour could the Lord bestow on me than to choose me for such apostolic work! And what greater joy for a son of Ignatius and a brother of Francis Xavier and Peter Claver and a thousand other missionaries of the Society, than to be allowed to give his life and strength to save the souls of poor abandoned Indians in the forests and jungles of Central America! Well, it has been my constant prayer for many years that the Lord might give me such a vocation, and it seems He has heard my prayer. I am sure you will rejoice with me, and give thanks to God for such a blessing. . . ."

It is almost distressingly outspoken for a man of his spiritual reticence. But then, you see, he was a little bit beside himself with delight; and a man gets reckless then.

Does it sound like a man who had become something of a visionary, who had lost a little of his humanness in the rapture of an exalted, supreme ideal? If it does, we have misunderstood him. The same letter goes on with boyishly affectionate plans for running around to San Antonio on his way through the States to Central America, and is full of tender, playful concern in all the minutiæ of his family's life. But he was never to see the dear aunt again, nor any of his family, until he lay upon his death-bed, years after.

CHAPTER X

The end of July saw the close of the tertianship, and Fr. Stanton and his companions set out on their return to the States. They visited, en route, Gandia, the old home of St. Francis Borgia, Pamplona and Loyola and Lourdes; and came through Paris to London. Here Fr. Stanton delayed about six weeks, studying entomology and the like in the British Museum and the South Kensington. It was not a great deal of time, but he knew quite definitely what he wanted to look up, and he worked very hard, gathering notes on Philippine insects and on some of the tropical fauna of Central America. He crossed in the Cunard SS. *Umbria,* reaching New York on September 23, and was in St. Louis by the end of the month.

From the time he had first learned his destination, he had planned to visit his family in San Antonio, on his way to Belize. But in St. Louis he was told that yellow fever had broken out in New Orleans which was in consequence quarantined, and that he must therefore sail from Mobile. More-

over, a party was waiting for him; their steamer was scheduled to sail on October 6; it was impossible to make the big detour around to San Antonio. "Man proposes, and God disposes" was at all times a favourite saying with him. He could say it again now, though this last disposition was particularly hard. At any rate, thank God, he had seen them all only a year before; that was pretty good fortune, as things go with a Jesuit. He tried to cheer them under the disappointment, and hustled off to Mobile.

After a rough, blustery passage in the *Anselm* — during which, as usual, he was sick enough — they landed in Belize on October 10. There were many who remembered him. His old boys, now grown into men, flocked around him. It was good to be with them again. He felt at home. But there was little time for chatting. His companions were assigned to the college in Belize; he was to strike out into the west of the Colony, to begin a new mission in the Cayo District. The Maya Indians at Benque Viejo, on the Mopan River, had long been asking for a priest. The Vicar Apostolic in Belize, Bishop Hopkins, had promised to send them one when he could. But all his priests were, like himself, Jesuits; and he had to wait until he could coax another man out of the Missouri Province. In the meantime, he

had urged the people of Benque Viejo to build a church. They had been three years at it, and now it was ready; and Fr. Stanton was to take charge of it.

Three days after his arrival in Belize, he wrote to his aunt:

". . . I am busy these days trying to gather together a few of the most essential articles for my priestly work and for my house, as there is absolutely nothing there yet, not a vestment or ornament for the church, nor a pan or kettle for the house. But there is no doubt but Providence will gradually provide in one way or another for what is most necessary. My poor Mayas up there have little or nothing, but are begging for a priest, and so we must make a beginning. I must open the mission alone, but it is the Lord's work, and He is just as near one in the forests and lagoons of the Cayo as on your neat asphalted streets of San Antonio. . . . Of course there is no regular mail service up to my mission, but if mail is sent for me to St. John's College, Belize, it will reach me.

" I ask you all to pray that God may bless my work amongst the Mayas. . . ."

He gathered together some tinned provisions, a few cooking utensils, one set of white vestments, two altar stones, and a few other odds and ends. In a week or so more he was ready to start. The Bishop accompanied him, to introduce him to his

new flock. It was the middle of the Rains, and the river was in flood. That gave them a hope of getting up the better part of the distance by gasoline launch. They started out bravely, and as the current was not so strong in the lower reaches of the river, they made thirty-five miles the first day, and tied up to the bank for the night. The next morning the pin holding the flywheel of the engine broke, and they had to wait whilst the engineer sawed a new pin out of a piece of iron.

As they passed little villages, most of them with outlandish names, the people begged them to stop and baptize their babies, but they were hurrying, and the Bishop promised to attend to them all on his way back. They feared the flood would go down in the river, when they would have to take to "pitpans," the long, native canoe, hollowed out of a couple of tree trunks, and their journey up river would run to weeks instead of days. The third day the river did begin to fall rapidly, and by evening had gone down about two feet. They met rapids in the upper river, and had to pole their launch through. That day Fr. Stanton, perched, pipe in mouth, on the bow of the launch, shot four alligators with his rifle. But at last, on October 27, they reached the Cayo, which was as far as the

launch could possibly go. Above this the Mopan was full of falls and rapids. Their goods had to be transported the rest of the way by land.

At the Cayo, the District Commissioner, Mr. Robert Franklin, welcomed them, and gave them the hospitality of his house. The Alcalde, or Mayor of the town, lent Fr. Stanton four cargadores (porters) to carry his possessions to Benque Viejo. The Bishop and Fr. Stanton stayed several days to attend to the spiritual wants of the six hundred Catholics in the Cayo; then they set out on borrowed horses for Fr. Stanton's headquarters at Benque Viejo. We may quote the rest from his letter home:

". . . We rode four hours in the rain through the tropical jungle, along winding paths called roads, where the horses often sank almost to their bellies in the sticky mud. Toward the end of the journey it stopped raining, and we were met at the Indian town of Succotz, a mile from our destination, by the Alcalde and the village band, i.e., three Indians with very long wooden flutes and a guitar.

" The whole town turned out to see us. They presented us with a milky drink made of crushed sweet corn, some freshly laid eggs, and oranges. The poor people offered us the best they had. They told us how glad they were to have a padre come to live amongst them.

"We soon passed on to Benque Viejo. They had been warned of our coming, and half a mile away we were met by about a hundred little Indian children, who sang us a song of welcome, kissed our hands, and then marched in front of us into the village.

"I have about eight hundred people here at Benque Viejo. They are Maya Indians. Some talk a little Spanish, but most of them only Maya, which I studied when I was in the mission the first time. My district comprises over thirty villages, and I am the only priest; so you see I have work before me. Some of the villages have such nice names: Succotz, Coquericot, Monkey Run, Young Gal, Yaalbaac, Holotonich, Kaxivenic, Pull Frock, Duck Run, Pull-and-be-Damn Rapids, etc.

"My people in Benque Viejo are building me a fine house, quite a palace for this region, about 15 x 30 feet, walls 10 feet high, built of sticks plastered with mud, with a high sloping roof of palm leaves. It will be all in one room, and the floor of clay. Just now I am living in a borrowed house. I cook my own breakfast, but one of the women cooks me the principal meal once a day, and everything is going along well.

"No time to write more, as I want to send this by an Indian who is going to the Cayo to-day. . . ."

In the meantime the river had fallen so much that no launch could get to the Cayo, and the Bishop returned to Belize in a small dorey — a smaller craft than a pitpan, hollowed out of a single log.

Fr. Stanton's position in Benque Viejo was really one of destitution. But he was as cheerful as a lark

about it all. He did write a begging letter to St. Louis University (which we shall cite directly), but forgot to send it, and discovered it only when he was "cleaning house" about a month later. However, as his more pressing needs began to clamour, he asked his brethren in Belize to help him, out of their own poverty. But we shall see that his demands were singularly modest. He writes to a Father in Belize:

"The Inland Summer Resort,
"Benque on the Mopan,
Nov. 29, 1905.

"My dear Father B——

"P.C.

"Cheer up, old man, wipe away the memories of the sabanones of Manresa and the prickly heat of Belize, and take a trip to beautiful Benque on the shady banks of the roaring Mopan. The Padre's house is progressing poco a poco according to the costumbre del pais. Last week they filled in the framework of the walls with thin poles freshly cut from the bosque. To-day they have started the plastering or filling in between the poles. This is Benque Viejo plaster: we believe in fostering home industries here, and everything in the building of our houses is home-grown. A hole is dug in the side of the hill on which the house stands, the mud is brought up into the house, mixed with water and chopped up green grass, and smeared on the poles by hand.

"After the plastering is finished inside and out, they

will begin on the clay floor. When this is well pounded and levelled, it must rest for a couple of weeks to harden. In the meantime the doors and windows are to be made, and this is the hardest part of the building, as the boards have all to be made by hand. The thatch roof is already finished. The final touch will be the whitewashing inside and out, and then the most handsome palace in Benque will be done. They hope to have it ready for occupancy by New Year. Then we shall welcome tourists from Belize — provided they bring their own hammocks.

" My cook is sick now, and I am playing cook myself for a few days. My ordinary bill of fare is not exactly sybaritic, but it is all right for one with a cast-iron stomach and a good appetite. I went out the other day and shot a squirrel and a toucan, and saw the tracks of deer, peccary, and a huge tiger, but didn't see the beasts. Fresh meat is hard to get. They kill pigs and beef occasionally in Plancha Piedra, over in Guatemala, and we buy it at five reals a pound. Eggs are not to be had for love or money in Benque. Nothing but pigs, goats, and garrapatas raised in the town.

" Just wait till the Padre gets his house and garden in running order, and Benque will have vegetables, chickens, and eggs. Positively the only vegetable grown here is a sort of round, small squash. . . .

" Lo and behold! I have just now received a letter from Franklin telling me of a cutting scrape in S. Jose. He starts for the scene to-morrow, and asks me to come along — woman cut — will probably die. Shall go, of course — first sick call in Cayo mission — good beginning — five or six days journey going and coming — look at your map and find S. Jose, up near boundary

of Orange Walk District. Shall be glad of the chance to take in on the way Yaalbaac and several other places.

"Excuse my abruptness, as it is late at night and I must get ready for my trip in the morning. To save postage and time, let me just jot down a few things I shall need before long, so that you may try to get them for me at the first opportunity.

"1. A spade, hoe, and rake, for garden use.

"2. A carpenter's chisel, plane, brace and 2 bits.

"3. Four brass shells for reloading (12 bore) centre fire, with a few boxes of percussion caps to suit; some powder and shot — a few buckshot and a good supply of birdshot. (Paper shells get damp here and are apt to cause trouble.)

"4. Seeds for garden. I should like to try ochra, gumbo, egg-plant, onions, the large sweet peppers, lettuce, beets, carrots, peas, tomatos, butter beans, muskmelon, and a good variety of squash. Any good fruit seeds or seeds of ornamental plants would be acceptable.

"5. A roll of barbed wire for fencing, to keep out quadrupeds and bipeds from forbidden precincts.

"Must finish in a hurry. Congratulations on your work with old boys and in college. Here I find that outside of Cayo and Benque practically everything is Maya and few of the people know anything else. If you speak Spanish they will say 'si, si,' but they don't know what you're talking about till they get it in their own tongue; then there is often quite a different song.

"Remember me in the Holy Sacrifice, old man; I need all the spiritual help possible. The field is fear-

fully wild; deplorable ignorance, superstitions, and deep-seated long-standing evil customs to be rooted out. But the grace of God is all powerful, and I have hopes of at least clearing off the timber and preparing the land for the sowers and reapers that may come afterward."

But he did not go to San Jose with the District Commissioner. Two days later, from the Cayo, he adds a note to the preceding letter, written on a torn half sheet of the D. C.'s official embossed paper:

"Got as far as Cayo, but shan't get further this trip. The D. C. could not wait, had to start for S. Jose yesterday morning instead of to-day, so I got left; but will make use of the time here very well. Shall return to Benque to-morrow evening.

"But roads! roads! In this district they are simply unspeakable. You can have no idea of what roads are here, at least in this season. It is only a little over nine miles from Benque to Cayo, and a few days ago it took me five hours to do it on horseback, and yesterday again five and a half hours on a mule. Rain and the dark caught me in both instances, and I was alone — had no guide. It was so dark I could not see the horse's head, but my guardian angel finally brought me through all right.

"There is no doubt, however, that I am built for the bush. My health is splendid. As for the climate of Benque, it is fine so far. Hot enough of course during the day, but the nights are cool, or rather cold. When I get up in the mornings my thermometer marks as

low as 63 or even 60 F. I have been wrapping myself in Fr. W——'s mackintosh and cassock and towels to keep warm. Finally I could not stand it at night, and I had to buy a blanket here in the Cayo — about four feet square — for which I paid $2.00 gold.

" In Benque I haven't felt a mosquito and have never used my net. But here at Cayo there are clouds of mosquitos. The only beasts that bother me are the garrapatas (ticks). I have to spend from an hour and a half to two hours every day picking off ticks, and my whole body is thickly peppered with blotchy little sores where they have left their mark. But one can't expect to have everything his own way in this life, even in the paradise of Benque.

" By the way, before I forget, would you try to send me a wash basin or bowl, of glazed metal. I have searched for one through Cayo and Benque in vain, and have nothing but the huge tin dishpan of the kitchen to wash my face in. It is a little inconvenient to scour the grease out of this every time I want to wash — and I don't want to fall into pure Spanish costumbres. I get a real bath in the rushing waters of the Mopan.

" Tell the brothers, when sending things up to me, to pack them if possible in good kerosene boxes; first, because everything has to be carried on the backs of men from Cayo to Benque; and secondly, because the boxes themselves are invaluable to me, as a *board* of any kind in Benque is as scarce as a snake in Ireland. Hasta otro rato!"

Whilst this letter does not say much directly, there is in it sufficient implication of rather primi-

tive conditions. As a matter of fact, his house equipment might be listed very briefly. He had a packing case for table, and for chair a box that had held tinned goods. Some one gave him a native bed: four posts joined together by boards, with ropes crisscrossed from top to bottom, on which was laid a mat woven of palm leaves. He had a small kerosene stove, one cup, one saucer, one plate, one glass, knife and fork and spoon, a skillet, a frying pan, and the very important dishpan.

The District Commissioner came over to Benque Viejo one day, and called on Fr. Stanton. He was invited to stop and have tea. Fr. Stanton was cook. He chatted away, brewed his tea, put a nice clean newspaper on the packing case, and set the table, placing on it his lone plate and cup and saucer. When everything was ready, he drew up a couple of boxes, and seated himself cheerfully at the place where the dishes were.

"Will you have sugar?" he asked the D. C.

"Delighted!" said his guest, holding out his hand, the palm cupped.

"Good Lord!" Stanton groaned. "That's what comes of living alone!" He had his tea out of his tooth-glass.

The D. C. was an enthusiastic admirer of Fr.

Stanton. Perhaps his admiration was the partial explanation of why he became a Catholic, not long after.

His church was almost worse off than his house. In the letter to St. Louis University, just spoken of, he gives a few details:

". . . When the provincial sent me, he told me to get down here and then squeal for what I needed. Well, I'm trying to squeal, but it's a long squeal from here to St. L. U. . . . For heaven's sake, try to get me a portable altar stone, with the necessary appurtenances. I have *forty* stations to get around to. I have two altar stones, one at the Cayo, the other here at Benque. But they each weigh about fifteen pounds, and you can imagine what my one vestment looks like after it has been crushed up with one of them and a few more traps in my saddle-bags. . . .

" Could you get me a few thin, light vestments, small *metal* cruets, etc.? And my big church at Benque — my sacristans using empty whiskey bottles for candlesticks and flower vases, because we have nothing better — not a statue — four horrible, dirty chromos, falling to pieces, the only pictures in the church — no censer, nor cope, nor decent crucifix — antiquated, worm-eaten missal — no ciborium — no ostensorium — only one chalice, very clumsy to pack on horseback. . . .

" I am not squealing for my own house, but for the Lord's. My good little mud house, with its hammock slung in a corner under the thatch, and a couple of packing cases for furniture, is quite a palace for these

parts; even if the pigs and goats of the village do break in now and then to make a meal off one's old boots or the scabbard of one's machete. Two holes in one side, closed with wooden shutters, serve as windows. When it rains, I close them up and light a candle: glass is an unknown luxury here.

"My bush church too is fine; same architecture as my house, only larger. In church, the men stand around the walls, whilst the women and children squat on the clay floor and the babies roll all over, garbed only in angelic innocence. . . .

"I am well enough off, so far as board and lodging go; though our Benque menu might not suit every stomach. Tortilla, or corn-cake, is the chief stand-by — flour, when it can be had, is too dear (eighty-seven dollars Mexican a barrel, as last quoted). Rice and beans are the other staples — no green vegetables of any kind, except red-hot chile, which they eat with the leathery tortillas to make 'em go down — no eggs for love or money — meat scarce. . . . The bush has plenty of game, but it would mean a little work to get it, and work isn't on their programme here.

"The talk about the weekly launch from Belize to the Cayo is somewhat of a joke. It gets up when there is a big flood on the river, and not otherwise. The Bishop and I were fortunate enough to get up a couple of months ago, and that is the last launch seen at the Cayo. The Bishop went home by dorey. Hence prices of provisions and stuffs of all kinds sent from Belize still hold their own — e.g., condensed milk, $1.00 a tin. So, blessed is the man who can live on bush products, and do without the frills. . . ."

"P.S. Look at the date of this! I thought it was

in your hands weeks ago, and to-day in cleaning up I find it missed fire. Well, never mind! It's just as fresh as if done yesterday."

Every letter of the time is perfectly cheerful, and shows him as contented and interested as a boy on a holiday. He refused to worry about anything; it was not his way. But as a matter of fact, he had mighty little time for worrying, even if he wished to do so. He began at once to make the rounds of his enormous "parish" preaching in Spanish and Maya, baptizing, administering the other sacraments. From the very outset, God blessed his work. The people positively loved him. Within two months his sole name throughout the District was "El Padre Bueno," the *Good* Father. Perhaps most of the Indians never knew his family name; his most official title being only "El Padre Guillermo." We may close this chapter with a letter to his aunt, which speaks of one of his mission trips. It is written from the Cayo, where he can never get paper, on the back of a blank governmental form for marriage certificate.

"The Cayo, January 28, 1906.

"My dearest Aunt:

"Please excuse this letter paper. I am not at my home, and have a chance to send a letter from this

CHURCH AT BENQUE VIEJO

THE OLD RESIDENCE AND THE NEW
BENQUE VIEJO

point and don't want to neglect it. I have just come in here to-day after a twelve days' trip in a dorey, with two Indian companions, visiting the scattered portion of my poor flock along the wild banks of the Belize River. I have not had a chance to shave in all this time, so you can imagine my barbaric appearance. Add to this my already dark skin, blackened by exposure to our sun on the tropical river, and you may fancy I look like a pirate. The nights we spent in the open or in Indian huts. But thanks be to God I am as hale and sound as ever, and hope to get back to Benque to-morrow, after resting here to-night. You know my house is only a short four hours ride from here.

"This river is full of rapids, where we had to get out and haul the boat up through the water. But I had two good men with me, and no serious accident happened. . . .

"Just got some mail, your letter and Mamie's amongst others. May the Lord repay you all. . . .

"I enclose another letter, which has just come back to me. I wrote it to you on November 2, but I note from the envelope that in my absentmindedness I addressed it to St. Louis instead of to San Antonio. Of course the post-office people couldn't find you, and so I get it back to-day. Well, I'll send it right this time, anyway. . . .

"Be sure I did not forget you all on Christmas. It was a day of hard work for me, and my Christmas dinner wouldn't make anyone's mouth water. But I was really happy. I was doing God's work. And when I sat down, rather tired, and alone, in my hut to eat my Christmas dinner, I would not have exchanged

my lot for all the palaces in the world and all the fine things in them. . . .

" Tell Uncle Lou there are plenty of deer down here to shoot. I believe he once could handle a rifle. I saw one the other day in my path as big as a horse, but of course *that* day I did not have my gun along. But on this river trip I carried my gun, and nearly every day brought down some parrots and iguanas — which are big, green lizards, four or five feet long, that lie up in the trees overhanging the water, and are very good to eat. In this way I supplied fresh meat through the journey. . . ."

CHAPTER XI

The rains passed and the dry season began in Benque Viejo. Fr. Stanton had visited most of the stations in his charge, making great circles of a few weeks at a time out from his home station. There is not a whisper of complaint from him. Yet the work was extremely hard, and results slow in coming. The people liked him, it is true, but they had difficulty about approaching the sacraments. And loneliness began to prey upon him. For nearly four months he had not seen a white man, save for the very occasional meetings with the District Commissioner. That meant more than one may realize to a companionable man. It was no natural enthusiasm that kept him up. Indeed, the effort to be always cheerful cost him more than he knew. But it was a successful effort. And he rightly thanked God for it.

His house was to have been ready by the new year. But he was in the land of mañana, where the rule is " never do to-day what you can put off to to-morrow." The new year came, and the month of

January and half of February passed, before n[ew] "convento," as the Indians called it, was finished. On the 15th of February he moved into it: an easy task as may be imagined. He slung his hammock, set up his mat bed for visitors, threw his saddle-bags and gun in the corner, rolled the packing case to the middle of the floor — and it was all done. He had bothered very little about the house, leaving the townfolk to take their own time about it. But in the end he was very glad it was ready, and eager enough to get into it, for he was to have a companion. Another Father was coming. And though he scarcely gave a thought to his own wants, beyond the most elementary necessities, he was anxious to have everything as comfortable as might be for the new-comer. He even nailed a sort of back-rest to one of his boxes.

And he was not a day too soon; for on February 16th Father Robert Henneman rode up to his door in Benque. Fr. Stanton was jubilant. They were old friends; Fr. Henneman was a stalwart worker, a genial companion, a lively, hustling man. They cooked a meal between them, and ate, and smoked, and laughed and planned until the dawn was flushing the east, and boasted about their fine quarters, and fought generously over who should have the

bed. And when finally Fr. Stanton climbed into his hammock, and pulled his "four foot square" blanket about him, he was the happiest man in the Cayo District. Everything was going to go splendidly now. They would divide the work between them, and there would always be some one at home to look after the people of Benque and answer the emergency sick-calls in the District. Of course, it hadn't been really hard before, but it would be a "circus" now. But Fr. Henneman noted how the long isolation from his own kind had played on his nerves; he had been living on his capital.

Fr. Stanton remained in Benque a short time, to help his companion to get used to the people and their ways, before starting out to visit his stations. His stay was prolonged until the end of the month by an accident. Whilst chopping wood for their breakfast one morning, just after his Mass, he chopped off part of a finger on his right hand. He made no fuss about it, and bandaged it up with a bit of cloth. But a little Indian who had seen the accident ran into the church and called Fr. Henneman, who hurriedly put some carbolic acid on the wound. It burned him fearfully, but he poohpoohed the whole thing; and eventually the finger ...aled up. In a few days more he set out on his

rounds of the villages. Passing through the Cayo, he hastily took the chance of writing to the English scholastic who had been his companion part of the time in Manila.

"The Cayo, March 5, 1906.

"My dear Mr. Brown: P. C.

"I have just received your thrice welcome letter today when I came into the Cayo, and don't want to let the chance pass to answer at once, as a pitpan will soon leave here for Belize and this letter must catch it. Excuse haste, paper (no other at hand here), and *everything.* Moreover, if my penmanship is worse than usual (supposing such a thing possible!), it is because I am writing under difficulties, having managed to chop off with a hatchet, three days ago, the first joint of third finger of right hand, when trying to gather wood to cook breakfast. It is beginning to heal up all right, and I can use, as you see, the remaining fingers pretty well.

"I have been four months alone with my Indians — with forty pueblos to look after. I have managed already to visit thirty of these stations, taken the census of every house, and started work in some of the more accessible villages. Talk about spiritual abandonment! Just think, I was the only priest in a region fully as large as Luzon (Cayo District and Peten in Guatemala), populated by Maya and Lacandon Indians, with a sprinkling of Caribs and Creoles along the Belize River. So you see I don't have to look for work. . . .

"Entomological work under the circumstances in Manila was certainly sweet to the natural man, and I may as well confess to a very strong temptation to

return. But during the tertianship I had time to weigh calmly both sides in the balance. I could not in conscience do otherwise than present my case to superiors, telling them my preference, but at the same time asking them finally to decide for me. And so here I am, buried in these inaccessible forests and swamps, but perfectly happy, and with a feeling of entire security that it is the Lord's work I am at and no self-seeking. There is little danger of vanity here, as from the bird's-eye view I have taken of the situation, the work humanly speaking must be extremely slow of results and the fruit reaped years after — when I am paying my debt in purgatory. . . .

" Though, as you may imagine, I am pretty much on the go, I have found time to start a garden (all my own labour, of course) with seeds sent me from the States, and have already the ordinary vegetables coming up nicely. I am also starting to plant the tropical fruits, etc. And now that I am writing, I wish to beg you or Fr. S—— to send me seeds from Manila, especially *ilang-ilang,* native and Chinese, champaca, betel-nut, cinnamon, native and Indian, stercularia, and any other Philippine or East Indian fruits or flowers — not forgetting the diminutive orange (red when ripe, and as big as a cherry) common in the garden. I have already growing, coffee, cacao, avocado, anonas, etc. Shall send Fr. S—— the vanilla, which I have also; it is common in the woods, but does not fruit at this time of year. Hope to write to him when I get time.

" Bugs? Yes, millions, but no time to consider them scientifically yet — *hymenoptera* too, terrible pests amongst Formicidæ — had to fight *Atta lebasi,* one of the ' parasol ants,' three nights in succession to prevent

them from running off with a whole barrel of corn inside my house. Ticks and fleas — covered with them every day — whole body like small-pox patient from ticks. Within last two days had *thirty-seven* 'jiggers' extracted from my feet. This tropical American burrowing tick is certainly a caution! Even one is enough for an experience, but this last dose of thirty-seven has left my feet as if I had put them up as a target for a dozen loads of bird-shot. The holes are still raw and bleeding, but I hope to be back at Benque soon, when I shall dose them with oil and prepare them for another go. I have only been stung once by a scorpion whilst here. So you see I haven't lost my love for the bugs, nor they theirs for me. But before the end I'll get after them with my cyanide bottle if they don't look out.

"Bravo! Bravo! old man, I told you there was a mine to be found in the Philippine hymenoptera. Keep it up, and keep me posted of all your successes. I shall send you my notes on the order as soon as I have time to unpack them and get them off. . . . I hope I shall be able to help you with some specimens from this part of the world after a while, when I shall have settled down.

"A thousand thanks for all the news about the brethren in Manila. Good old C——! How I should enjoy another glimpse of his ascetic mug! Tell him I offer him the ministership of the Benque residence, which is a tempting offer for a minister, as the meat bill will not be large. The Benque community hasn't seen fresh meat for over six weeks. Assure him that the 'majadero' who perfumed the retired corner of the 'cementerio de Calixto' with his pipe instead of

with his virtues, is trying his best to hold aloft 'la cruz, la cruz' amongst the poor benighted Mayas of the Mopan, but that he feels lonesome for the 'alioli'!

"Wish I had time to write more. Any way, my crippled hand is getting tired. Salute in my name all the good fathers, scholastics, and brothers in Manila. . . ."

His Cayo stationery was always weird; this last was written on a bit of wrapping paper, that had come about a magazine. He had to write as occasion offered, and could not carry paper about with him. Besides, he was forever losing such things as he did carry.

His garden was a delight to him, and a source of marvel to the Indians. His aunt and sister kept him supplied with seeds and added implements as he needed them. Indeed they were his chief support in every way, particularly in the beginning. The Indians were poor, and could contribute little or nothing, nor were they always ready to do even the little they could. Fr. Henneman narrates a typical instance; of which, however, Fr. Stanton would not make mention in his letters; he always spoke most kindly of his Indians, and was almost too generous in finding excuses for them.

"Succotz has a church dedicated to St. Joseph, and the people wished a novena preparatory to the

feast, in March, 1906. Fr. Stanton was to say Mass every day at the village. We had no corn, and the Succotzianos had hundreds of bushels, which they were holding to boost the price (high finance in the bush!). Fr. Stanton asked them to sell him some. He explained the case to the Alcalde, and insisted on three sacks of corn. Only one was brought, and when the other two were not forthcoming, Fr. Stanton refused to continue the novena. He had forbidden the usual procession with a boar's head, before which they burned candles and incense and prayed — a relic of paganism. When he did not come for Mass, the Succotzianos determined they would have their procession. The hog was killed, the biggest and fattest for many years; but when he was cut open, he was found — to the dismay of the rebels — to be swarming with worms. Then of course their superstition took another turn — 'The curse of God!' they all cried out, and were ready to give in to the Padre. And, as Fr. Stanton remarked, it was St. Patrick's Day in the Morning, March 17. But in the meantime, the Succotzianos had sent a deputation to the District Commissioner, beseeching him to force Fr. Stanton to continue the novena. Of course he told them that the Government couldn't interfere in

Church affairs, and added that, if they wanted his private opinion, it was: 'Si no hay mais, no hay misa'— no corn, no Mass! and they ought to be ashamed of their conduct."

With such children as these one could not be angry; certainly Fr. Stanton never was. Even when he disciplined them, as he had to do from time to time, he was chuckling to himself. Only once or twice did he let his temper show, and then he was rather terrifying. The poor Indians went about awed, astounded over the incomprehensible change in "El Padre Bueno." They attributed it to the sun. He was infinitely patient with them, though he kept a firm hand too. He had a sort of distinction between his personal patience and his severer official stand. In private, though he coaxed and pleaded with, he never snubbed those who were living in concubinage — the curse of the Colony. But as the first Holy Week drew on — to quote Fr. Henneman:

"We announced on the two Sundays preceding that none but good Christians could march in the Palm Sunday procession. Fr. Stanton was dramatic in his denunciation of 'amancebados y concubinas.' It was a terrible blow to these people, who do love a procession.

" Then came the day itself. Fr. Stanton offered to be celebrant, so that Fr. Henneman, whom the Indians called ' el Padre bravo,' the violent Father, could manage the mob. It was clearly explained that all should march two and two. The children had been drilled for weeks, but it was impossible to get the women into any sort of order. Fr. H. shouted himself hoarse — ' Dos y dos! Two and two! ' — but there they stood, ten here, four there. Suddenly Father H. noticed that they were holding hands in pairs, clinging to one another with a death grip — in pairs, but not in file. He rushed into the church to Fr. Stanton: ' Tell me how to say, march two and two *in ranks* — or I'll burst! ' To prevent the catastrophe, Fr. Stanton grinningly told him. Out rushed Fr. H. With much shouting, shoving, frowning, the procession got into line — they marched like grenadiers, Fr. H. passing up and down along the line to keep it in order. Fr. Stanton said he could tell where Fr. H. was at any moment — as at that point there was a wild swerving, not to get too near to the Grand Marshal.

" The amancebados hid in their houses, and the women wept bitter tears because they could not take part in the ' beautiful ' procession; and after Easter

the proclamation of marriage banns swelled to a remarkable number."

He was very practical in his plans and methods. He studied the character and ways of his Indians unobtrusively, but keenly; learned what motives appealed to them, what were their prejudices, their superstitions, their local customs, religious, social, civil. It was slow work. The Maya Indian is a simple, quiet, inoffensive person (except, of course, when drunk — which he frequently is); but he is naturally reserved, and inclined to be suspicious of white men. He talks little at any time, but he closes up like a clam in the face of inquiries which he even suspects of bearing upon his tribal customs or beliefs. It is no little tribute to Fr. Stanton's character, and to his cleverness too, that in a few years he really knew his people. Of course, his comparative familiarity with their language aided him a great deal in this. But ultimately he succeeded because he made them his friends. They are ordinarily a most undemonstrative people; and it was a matter of wonderment to observers to see them rush out in delight to meet him. There is scarcely need to say that the children simply dogged his steps.

He wished very much to teach them habits of industry; a thing for which the Indian has no love. His garden was begun with that purpose in view, quite as much as for its obvious need in his own living. He wanted to rouse their curiosity in the matter, as a step toward getting them to take up a similar activity. The first part of the program was a brilliant success. They never wearied of watching him work — and they never offered to help him; perhaps they were chary of depriving him of any of the pleasure he seemed to take in such a strange occupation. After a while he got some of the boys interested, gave them seeds, and started them at cultivating small patches. Then the women, who had to do what field-work there was in any case, began to make little gardens. He encouraged them all, and meanwhile kept on with the good example in his own garden. But they advanced very slowly in their imitation. They made little spurts of a few days work, and then rested whilst the jungle crept swiftly back upon their gardens. A woman who was admiring the trim cleanness of his plots, asked him one day to what saint he prayed, that his garden should be so free from weeds. "Oh, a very powerful saint," he laughed. "El Santo Trabajo! — Saint Hard Work!" And the woman

assured him solemnly that she had never heard of such a saint. Certainly, outside of the missionaries' house there was no shrine to him in Benque Viejo.

After a few months, his garden quite supplied his table. More and more contributions came in from relatives and friends in the States. The church was fairly well equipped. He began to get books. He even got a real stove, though he could get no one to cook on it. They had never seen such a thing. When some one sent him a little piece of carpet, which he put in the center of their clay floor, his Indian visitors almost endangered his walls in their efforts to avoid treading on the beautiful thing on the floor.

Writing to his sister, on March 26, to thank her for her latest gifts, he says:

"I have just got out of the saddle after a hard three days' trip, but cannot go to bed without at least acknowledging your loving remembrances — as I hope to be able to send off some mail to-morrow to the Cayo. . . .

"I came down into these almost inaccessible wilds with absolutely nothing but a strong reliance on Providence. But now, little by little, Fr. Henneman and I are receiving from friends many of the more necessary things for our churches and our work. Of course we must depend this way upon charity, because

our poor ignorant and abandoned Indians are miserably poor as a rule, living on corn and chile and occasional game, and it will necessarily be years before they will be able to support their own churches and provide them with the equipment needed. But it is God's work, and He will provide in one way or another.

" My maimed finger is getting along well, but slowly; and you see it does not hinder me from using a pen, though as yet I cannot use that hand for other work. My old *left* hand comes in mighty nicely now, and with my machete in this hand I can do more in my garden than any Indian around here can do with both hands. . . ."

But he had not much time to enjoy what he called the " luxuries of Benque." It would be a conservative estimate to say that he spent one third of his time in the saddle or in canoe, visiting his pueblos. His suberb physical constitution enabled him to go through with work and endure privation which would have soon killed another man. He gave no thought to his fatigue, and never spared himself. There was so much to be done, and he was impatient to be about it. But withal, he was never a fussy worker, he had no nervous haste; but steadily, cheerfully, with persistent energy and zeal, he went about, exhorting, encouraging, coaxing, advising his people, and administering the sacraments. He knew he was strong, and he taxed his strength

to the utmost. There was no pose in his making light of discomforts and weariness; that was his honest way of looking at them. On June 4, 1906, he wrote home:

". . . I have just returned from a river trip, after being away from home thirty-one days, moving about from place to place amongst my scattered people on the river banks and in the bush. Thanks be to God, I got back safe, to the relief of Fr. Henneman, who had not been able to hear from me during these days.

" My health was good until the last week, when I got a little stroke from the heat, followed by several days' fever, which put me on my back for four days; but I am now myself again. Fortunately, I was getting near my journey's end when I got the little attack, and as soon as I was able to get up, I left the Indian hut where I had been lying, and with the help of my two faithful Indian companions arrived safely in Benque, after three more days' travelling. I am all right now, the fever is gone, my finger is healed completely, though the joint remains stiff and a little crooked. . . .

" Excuse my haste and brevity to-day, as I have a thousand things to attend to that have accumulated during my absence from home. But I wanted at least to send you a word, to let you know the Lord brought me back safe — though you would have to look twice to make sure of me now, with my black beard. Travelling about almost continually in the bush, I have so little chance to shave that I have finally given up and begun to let my beard grow.

"Don't forget my mission in your prayers. Love to all, especially the little ones. In haste. . . ."

One would never guess from this letter that it was written by a man still very sick, and that the last "three more days' travelling" so casually mentioned had been three days of torture, when his Indians doubted if they should get him to Benque at all. His companion was shocked at his haggard appearance when he reached Benque, and wanted him to go to bed; but he laughingly pitched in at his correspondence instead, and said bed could wait a while. He did rest for a few days, and with his wonderful recuperative power was really himself again in a short time.

At home he slept little. He worked until midnight at his letters, or at entomological work or his notes on the fauna of the Colony. He was up again at five in the morning, ran down to the river for a plunge, then went to the church for his meditation and Mass. He usually worked several hours a day, in the broiling sun, in his garden. Any old sort of food satisfied him, and he was very abstemious in the matter of drink. He smoked a pipe almost incessantly, using the raw, sun-cured native tobacco, which was remarkably strong.

He had never worried in the least about money

matters or his ways and means of living, partly from a simple faith and trust in God, but partly from a large, smiling incapacity for the minutiæ of business affairs. He was a sort of superior at Benque, and was supposed to bear the responsibility of managing the place and its dependent stations. The Bishop, in the beginning, had made the people promise to pay their Padre something like twelve or fifteen dollars a month for his support. Fr. Stanton rarely got the money, hardly ever knew whether or not he had got it, and usually gave it away to the poorer people of the village when he did get it. Any sort of accounts were an annoyance and something of a puzzle to him.

Fr. Henneman gives some instances of his business methods:

"On his first trip around the pueblos, after I joined him, his expenditures far exceeded his income from the alms of the people. I ventured to remark that we could not well live that way. When he came home from the next trip, he triumphantly proclaimed that he was ahead this time. He brought out his memoranda, and began to figure out his receipts and expenses. After an hour or so, I found him still at it, and asked, 'What is the trouble?'

"'Why, I think I have it now. I say, I believe I'm two dollars richer than when I left home! But it doesn't seem quite right.'

"He read out his items, and I took them down. We found out that his expenses again exceeded his receipts.

"'Well, now, that's queer!' he said.

"He rummaged around in his saddle bags a while, came back, and laid some money on the table.

"'But your accounts show you have a deficit of three dollars and some cents!' I exclaimed. 'Did you pay the men?'

"'Why, of course!'

"'And your bills for supplies?'

"'Every one; there's nothing due; that I'm sure of.'

"I counted the money; nearly five dollars.

"'There you are now!' he shouted gleefully. 'Didn't I tell you I came out ahead this time!'"

CHAPTER XII

It is almost impossible, even by multiplied incidents, to give anything like an adequate idea of what his work was in the mission, of the constant hardships of that work, of its weary monotony. Fr. Stanton had always about him a touch of boyish romance. His imagination thrilled to the thought of the tangled woods, the great, rich silences of the tropics. He had a boy's delight in riding, in carrying weapons. We may fancy that during the years he was away from British Honduras these strands too were woven into the cords that drew him back. They were decidedly the lesser part of the attraction, but they were a part. He loved the open; he loved to think of himself in the dark forests, machete in hand, hacking his way through the matted bush, or swimming his horse across rivers or swinging a paddle in his canoe through the soft night; he could shut his eyes and see the moonlight on the river. But those dreams chilled swiftly in the face of reality. One ride through the bush may be a pleasant memory; a score

of them, a hundred of them, become a nightmare. There may be exultation in the thought of dropping down the smooth river in a little dorey, with a gun at one's feet, and a quick eye for a toucan or iguana in the sweeping branches overhead. But there is only a world of weariness in body and soul, when day after day at the paddle has blistered one's hands, and the sun beats mercilessly down, and the glare on the river is blinding, and the chance of game to be shot has become only the dull question of whether or not one eats that day. Well, all work is monotonous; for all of us the glamour of the future slides imperceptibly into the dreary round of the present. Whatever natural charm the mission had for him was soon lost; there remained only its unrelenting toil, its loneliness, its endless struggle against the apathy and stupidity of his Indians, its privations, its weariness.

His particular field was rather easily the hardest in the mission. Its material conditions were the worst, its people the rudest, its extent the greatest. There were so many stations to be visited that, even though he had a companion in his district, they were seldom together; he was constantly on the road, alone. In the beginning, he usually had a guide with him. Later, as he got to know the

country better, he went alone, or at most had some boy along for company. He dreaded loneliness, though it was most often his portion; for his Indian companion was always taciturn.

Very frequently he lost his way, even after he had spent years in the district. He rode often by compass. The trails were obscure, hard to find, hard to follow. Even the natives lose their way in those woods, where the faint paths, if untravelled for a few weeks, become so overgrown with bush as to be blotted out completely. He made little of having to dismount and walk ahead of his horse, to chop a path through the bush for himself and his beast. Often he passed the night in the forest, sleeping on the ground, with his saddle-bags for pillow. He admitted that, the first few times, he shared the Indians' dread of the "tigers," as they call the jaguars, which might come upon them as they slept. And, in the weariness of the actual, he so far forgot his boyish romance as to leave his rifle behind him half the time. But, as he said, "God was there too," and no harm ever came to him.

It might be wearying to quote his letters of this time consistently. There is a good deal of sameness in them, the record of a rather unvarying

round of work. But we shall give some extracts, to show roughly a few details of that work. They are almost entirely from letters to his sister and aunt.

"Benque Viejo, Nov. 13, 1906.

"I have been so busy the last few weeks that I have not had time even to think of writing to any one. It is near midnight now, but there is a chance to get a letter down to Belize to-morrow. . . .

"I have been alone the past month. Fr. Henneman having gone to Belize for his annual retreat. In the meantime I am not only pastor but school-teacher as well, as I have been obliged to dismiss the Carib teacher I had for his misconduct, and have to carry on the Indian school we have here, until Fr. H—— brings another teacher. The devil is working very hard against us here amongst these poor creatures, and we have to fight a hard battle, but God will win out in the end. . . .

"Here in Benque there are only two men who understand a little English, and one who can speak a few words of it. Everything is in Spanish or Maya — in most of the villages only Maya."

"Jan. 16, 1907.

". . . Here we are not only priests, we are the doctors, and the carpenters, gardeners, fence-builders, ditch-diggers, cooks, hostlers, saddlers, and everything else. We are beginning to get our place into some sort of shape — except our mud house, which *will* keep falling down in the rain. My vegetable garden especially is the wonder of the country round about.

"I have not been away from home, except on sick

calls, for five weeks now, but to-day I start out again."

"Mar. 5, 1907.

"Fr. Henneman went down to Belize last week, to give a Lenten mission there, so I am alone again for another five or six weeks.

". . . We have been gradually fixing up things about our shack, and have now a real, civilized stove, with an oven, under a little shelter just outside our house. The natives don't know what to make of the strange thing, and come from miles around to look at it, and will not believe that that funny affair can cook things. We have a Carib boy whom *we* are training to cook, though as yet we do most of the practising at it ourselves.

"I should like if you or Mamie would write out a full set of directions how to make the good old home-made bread, the proportions of everything used, and how to get it to raise, etc.— also for pancakes. . . .

"Excuse my haste, but I am really tired and have not yet finished my Breviary, and must do it before midnight."

"Belize, May 16, 1907.

"Just a line before I get back into the bush. After a long spell in the bush, visiting various scattered native settlements, I got within a day's ride of Belize. So I have run in to rest my horse for a day or two, and have the pleasure of seeing the Fathers here.

"To-morrow morning I am off again for the wilds, and expect to reach home, that is, Benque Viejo, along in the beginning of June. This year I am doing my rounds on horseback entirely. In my saddle-bags I carry all the necessaries for Mass, and a change of

clothes, and trust to Providence for the rest. . . . I have been very fortunate this trip so far, and have not been obliged to sleep in the jungle a single night, though I came mighty near doing so one night.

"I am getting pretty well acquainted with my district by this time, and can usually make my way without the trouble of guides, who often give great bother and delay. I go from village to village, staying such time as may be necessary, to instruct the natives, administer the sacraments, and do what I can for them. I carry my hammock with me — usually would have no place to sleep otherwise, as their huts are so poor, crowded, and filthy. But the grace of God is beginning to work in the souls of some of my flock, and the journey, though full of material inconveniences, is full also of spiritual consolation for me."

"Belize, May 26, 1907.

"Here I am still. . . . I was about to start up country last week, as I planned, but on getting up in the morning of the day fixed upon I found to my surprise I was a little out of sorts. I tried to say Mass, but had to leave the altar without doing so — found I had chills, fever, and a badly inflamed leg. The doctor was called, and he ordered me to bed — said the fever was caused by the leg, and the bad leg caused by riding. I had been a good many days in the saddle since I left Benque, but was apparently as good as new, till this thing came on suddenly, all in one night, it seems.

"Thanks to the Lord and the doctor's skillful treatment, everything is all right again, and I am off in the morning. It will probably be two or three weeks befor I get back to Benque. . . . Of course, since I left

there I have received no mail, and shan't hear anything of the outside world till I get back in the middle of next month. . . .

"Take care of yourself. Hope you will be able to repeat your visit to the sea-shore frequently. I don't think there is any exercise better than good sea-bathing. When home at Benque I take my regular plunge in the Mopan. But on my trips it is different. On my way down I was glad enough to find a place to sling up my hammock and snatch a few hours sleep with my boots on, just as I was. In these Indian villages privacy is unknown, and usually the open woods as a sleeping place are preferable to the filthy cabins of the natives, filled with fleas and all sorts of vermin. But such is the life of the missionary in these barbarous places, and thanks be to the Lord, He has given me plenty of health and strength to stand it.

"The Rains are just beginning, and I expect a good tough time of it in getting back, with plenty of work ahead. Don't forget to pray that the Lord may bless my work, for all the success must come from above. . . . The first bananas I planted are now bearing, and I expect to start in on my vegetable garden again as soon as I return."

"Benque Viejo, July 16, 1907.

"Just twenty years ago to-day since the Lord allowed me to be enrolled amongst the sons of St. Ignatius. I can hardly realize the time that has passed. . . . Time goes quickly when one is busy.

"I have just returned to Benque, and though somewhat sore in the bones, shall be all right in a couple of days. In trying to make one stretch, from a place called Orange Walk, where I had been for the First

Friday, to the Cayo, a distance of about forty miles, I managed to get a late start and was caught by the night when about half way. I had been soaking wet all day, with nothing to eat but a cup of coffee and a biscuit in the morning, and had been in the saddle all day; and finally it was so dark, and still raining, and I was so tired at midnight, that I had to dismount beside a little creek and throw myself on the wet ground just as I was, until I had light enough to see the road again.

"During the night my horse slipped his halter and made back toward his home, and morning found me alone, wet, tired, fasting from the morning before, with a pair of saddle-bags weighing close on to fifty pounds, and about ten miles from any human being. There was nothing to do but to shoulder those bags and make through the mud for the Cayo. I arrived there in about five hours, and confess I could not have gone much further. . . .

"As it was Sunday morning, I managed to get a change of clothes and succeeded in saying Mass; but for two days I was not able to mount a horse to get back home. I am better now, and the aches are getting out of my bones. . . . We are in the midst of the Rains now, and travelling through the forest trails at this time is not exactly a picnic. But it's God's work, and what more profitable can we be engaged in!"

It is curious to see, in a letter of just a week later, a brief resume of this last trip, without so much as a reference to the rather trying experience he has just recounted. Little things of that sort

were so common in his life that they scarcely called his attention, unless he happened to be writing just after they had occurred. He sums up the period covered by the last three letters, in this cheerful, nonchalant way:

"Benque Viejo, July 24, 1907.

"Well, thank God I got back safe and sound to Benque, after thirty-two days in the bush. About three hundred and fifty miles I made on horseback. I learned considerably more this trip about the bush and about the various trails they call roads here. We had to cut our way through sometimes, but of course we had our machetes by our sides and were all ready for it. I generally managed to make some human habitation by nightfall, but my boy and I lost ourselves several times and had to sleep in the forest. I am quite used to this by this time. My boy was afraid of tigers and snakes, but we came through all the way without even seeing a tiger.

"The riding and swimming of the animals across rivers was pretty rough work, and I was laid up a few days with a bad leg, but nothing serious happened, and I am back again safe and fixing up my vegetable garden for the coming year.

"The Rains have begun, and a few days before my arrival they had a terrific storm, accompanied by *hail-stones* as big as pigeons' eggs! No one here had ever seen the like before. Our mud house is pretty well battered down, as you may imagine, but mud plaster is cheap here. You would laugh to see the plasterers filling up the chinks again with their hands — the only trowels they know of. . . ."

Then he goes on to talk enthusiastically about his "agricultural school," and begs a few bulbs and seeds; he is going to try to grow flowers for the altar. He says of his people in general:

". . . It is awful work to get them to Mass and confession and communion. They care for only *two* sacraments, baptism, and confirmation, and these they don't neglect if they have the chance. But confession, communion, and matrimony, they seem awfully afraid of, though they imagine they are great Catholics. . . ."

Now and then his aunt got a letter, of which the following is a fair sample:

". . . A few days ago, whilst I was away in the bush, a letter came here for me, which I am told was from San Antonio, and which I suppose came from you or Mamie. When I got home, we searched high and low, but the letter is not to be found. Whether it was carried off by the wind, or eaten by a goat, or was swept up by our Carib boy, is more than I know. But I want to let you know, so that if there was anything important in the letter, you might tell me again."

Well, in such a household, naturally anything might happen. His aunt and sister were as patient with him as he was with his Indians. Then, of course, he was ever and anon writing letters which he forgot to mail, or to address. But he got over that in time, by writing only after he had made

sure of his arrangements for getting the letter off.

He had been in Benque nearly two years now, and in that time had only twice been back even to such civilization as Belize offered; once in the August of 1906, when he had gone for his annual retreat and to go through the ceremony of taking his final grade in the Society as a Spiritual Coadjutor; the second time, about a year after, when his loneliness seized the chance of a forced march to ride in for a day's chat. The life was beginning to tell on both himself and his companion. Malaria attacked the latter, and forced him to go to Belize to see a doctor. Fr. Stanton bore the heavier burden, and in time even his vigorous, wiry constitution weakened under it. He writes from Benque Viejo, on August 16, 1907:

". . . Many thanks for your dear kindness. . . . I answer at once because I shall not have a chance to write again for a month or more as I must get off again for another round through the bush. . . .

"For the past month I have been alone here, as Fr. Henneman had to go down to Belize to see the doctor. At the same time the Lord wished to give me a little taste of sickness and knock some of the vanity out of me. The very day Fr. H—— left me, I was taken down rather badly with a curious mixture, chills, vomiting, dysentery, and fever, all at once. In about eight days it left me, but left me without any strength.

But I have been pulling together gradually, and now I am all O.K. and as good as new. A little sickness is a mighty good thing, to teach us how great a blessing perfect health is and how grateful we ought to be for it.

"I expect it is dry enough in your part of the world now, but we are in the midst of the Rains. We have heavy rains every day, but often they pass quickly, and the hot sun comes out right after, and the whole earth is steaming with moisture. Words can give no idea of our trials at this time. But a good part of this trip I shall try to make by dorey on the river. The Bishop is coming up soon to visit some of the towns along the river, and I must prepare some of my Indians for confirmation. . . . The ignorance, superstition, and vice amongst them is almost incredible. But gradually grace will triumph over these obstacles.

"Owing to my little spell of sickness, my vegetable garden has run wild a little, but the last few days I and the boys have been cleaning it up, and we are getting some nice radishes, egg-plant, cucumbers, and green beans, with other things coming. Thank you, by the way, for the flower seeds. . . . I shall try this year to grow some flowers for the church.

"As these people make no fences, and have their hogs inside and outside their houses, rooting all around, you do not find anything planted near the town or in it. Their corn patches they plant from three to eight miles away in the bush, so that the hogs will not harm them. Fr. H—— and I have put a good fence all around our place. And we did every bit of it ourselves, as the men here are too lazy to work. . . ."

In October he went to Belize for his yearly retreat, and remained there two weeks in all. Writing from there, he announces his purpose to remain at Benque Viejo, after his return, until Christmas. He had been very steadily on the move during most of the rains, and he determined to rest a month or two, and not set out on his rounds again until the dry season had begun. We shall see how he kept his resolve.

Of course, he could not just journey straight to Benque Viejo. He must make use of the opportunity to do a little work on the way. He writes from a village up the river, on October 22:

"Here I am, bound up inactive for several days, unable to move out of the house; and as I have pen and paper (for a wonder!), I find it a good time to scratch off a few words to the dear ones at home.

"I started from Belize for Benque just a week ago, on a little launch which is now running up the river to the Cayo. It took three days to reach Orange Walk, where I wanted to stop off for a day or two to visit this settlement of negroes, Spanish Indians, and Mayas. We have the League established here, and a school with over sixty children, taught by one of my old pupils of Belize. . . .

"Either Fr. H—— or I visit the place once a month, and get about fifty or sixty confessions and communions. But this time we are in the midst of the

Rains. I arrived in the middle of a downpour, and had great fun climbing the slippery bank, over sixty feet up from the river. It has been raining almost continually ever since, and everything is flooded knee-deep in water and mud. In spite of the very bad weather, I had from thirty to forty persons at Mass every day, and so far have had twenty confessions and communions, and one baptism.

"The houses, about forty in number, are scattered along the high bank of the river, on the edge of the forest. I am sleeping in a deserted bush house, with the rain coming down everywhere in it, except just in the corner where I have my hammock slung. Last night a swarm of red ants, that sting very hotly, swarmed into the house and covered everything, getting in a few dozen bites on my hands and feet and neck, before I could get out of the way and climb on to some old boards lying in a corner, where I passed the rest of the night in peace. . . ."

He asks his sister for some shirts, and apologizes for asking. Then he adds a postscript, dated from the Cayo, on the day following:

"I am back now as far as the Cayo, arriving at 1:30 this morning. Everything flooded with mud and water. Pouring rain. I must get a horse and get out to Benque to-day, as I hear Fr. Henneman is not well and is anxiously awaiting my return. Ten miles more to make, and over a terrible road through the bush, with the horse up to his belly in mud and water most of the time. But with the Lord's help I hope to be safe at

home before night. I must be off immediately, so good-bye for the present and God bless you all."

He wrote no more than that he was "inactive for a couple of days." The fact is that he was laid up with a high fever, and that it was a very sick man who set out on those "ten miles more." The District Commissioner begged him to stay with him, but he would not listen. His partner was in need; he had to get to him; the ride would shake the fever out of him, he laughingly asserted. He stumbled into Benque at nightfall, reeling in the saddle. He turned in to nurse his companion, who was too sick to notice that his nurse was staggering with fever. But he was well almost as soon as the other, such was his astonishing vitality, and *in less than a week* was off on the journey of which he gives his account in the following letter home:

"Benque Viejo, November 6, 1907.

"I have just returned safely from one of the dirtiest trips I have yet made. It was a visit to three different Indian towns hidden away in the deep bush. I have been away only a week, having made some hundred and sixty miles on horseback, the whole of it through dense jungle, where the mid-day sun scarcely penetrates, my poor beast plowing through sticky mud and tangled roots, usually sinking above his knees, whilst the rider, machete in hand, had to chop and cut

through the mass of rank vegetation and hanging lianas that very often completely closed the so-called road, which is nothing but a narrow Indian trail.

"After travelling thus for a whole day, one comes to the collection of miserable huts forming the village, and wonders why any human beings should choose to live in such a place. But the Indian does not like to be bothered by the white man or by the negroes of the Colony, and looks for such out-of-the-way places far from any other town. There he plants his little 'milpa' or corn patch, hunts the wild animals, and lives as his ancestors did thousands of years ago.

"These Indians of Yaalbaac, Chorro, and San Jose are all nominally Catholics, but are almost entirely ignorant of the teachings of the church and full of all sorts of strange superstitions and pagan practices. They have their little bush church, where one finds the altar made of little saplings and sticks, sometimes covered over with clay and whitewashed. There are always a number of wooden crosses on it, dressed in rags and ribbons of various colours, and sometimes a picture of the saints, or coloured advertisements, placards such as Schlitz' Beer, Reuter's Soap, or Hennessy's Brandy, before which the poor creatures burn candles made from the wax of the wild bee, and incense which they get from the trees of the forest.

"I gathered them together for some instructions, so far as my time would permit; had rosary and other prayers in the evening, and celebrated Mass, etc. The babies were brought to be baptized, and a number of marriages were arranged for my next visit.

"But the man is now calling for the mail. So I must conclude. Love to each and every one.

"It is still the Rains, and travelling is awful. But I don't contemplate any more trips till after Christmas, as there is a great deal to do in Benque — getting the children ready for the end of school, their entertainment, getting up a drama too for the young men and girls, etc. . . ."

He did stay home in Benque then for a couple of months, barring, of course, sick calls and the like. He made use of the time to give a new impetus to his "agricultural college," as he called it, which was almost always in need of a new impulse, but which eventually did a great deal of good. Life even "at home" was anything but idle. He writes on November 25:

". . . The Indians and Peteneros are certainly the most miserable Indians I have yet had to deal with. They are far below the Filipinos in civilization, and so lazy that so long as there is a handful of corn in the house you could not get them to move a finger for love or money. In a country so rich that the soil will grow anything if you only tickle the surface of it, they are half starving during the few months of the year when the corn is scarce. . . .

"We are trying however to train the children, and in the evenings I take the boys in the last hour of school and teach them gardening. To each boy I give a plot or two of ground, show him how to clean and cultivate it and grow various useful vegetables. Our school garden is now quite a wonder, and the children

have already gathered and learned to eat their radishes, cabbages, tomatoes, etc. This is why I need fresh seeds from time to time.

" We have just started a new church in one of my stations. It is going to be a very fancy one, actually built of boards, with a corrugated iron roof shipped up the river from Belize. All the other churches in our district are only of mud and sticks, with thatch roof, just like our house. . . .

" I have just been run out of the house for a while by what we call the ' marching army.' These are large, black, shining ants, that hunt in huge columns several feet wide and sometimes several hundred yards long. They stop at nothing, and clean up all insects and smaller animals that come in their path. . . . The dog is attacked, and is yelping and running about like mad. . . . They swarmed up my feet and legs before I knew it, and they bite with a grip like a bulldog's, never letting go till you simply pull them to pieces, and even then often the jaws stay locked in your skin. The only thing to do is to clear out and wait till they pass, which usually takes from about fifteen minutes to a half hour. They are pretty good visitors (that is, if you yourself are not caught by them!) as they clean out every cockroach, scorpion, centipede, and other insect in the house. When they come, we simply leave everything open and get out of the way till they have finished and pass. . . .

" They have left the house, but I hear my boys in the kitchen jumping and squealing, so I see they are investigating things out there. . . . Now I hear them at the little chickens. . . .

" Just saved the little chicks, but we had a lively time

of it, with Fr. Henneman and myself and the two house boys hopping about like crazy men — 10:30 P.M.— the ground alive with the vicious insects, climbing all over us — but we saved the chicks.

"So you see there is no want of variety in our life, even if we are in the jungle. . . .

"Excuse blots — hard to keep still — no time to write over again."

But he is never too busy to write home, and he finds time even for special letters now and then to his little niece and nephew. The little thatched hut of the hard-riding missionary has a place for kindly tokens of home. He tells the seven year old nephew:

"When any of the little fellows of our town come into my house they like to look at your picture which hangs on the mud wall of our 'parlor,' and they say: 'Mira, mira, que muchachito tan lindo! Es el sobrinito del Padre Guillermo, se llama Joseito!' You get Marie to translate this for you; she knows Spanish. . . ."

The beginning of 1908 saw him off on his rounds again. There had been a great deal of sickness in the district, which kept him more than ordinarily hard at work, both as priest and doctor. On his second long round, in March, he writes home:

". . . Thank God, Fr. H—— and I have so far been

preserved. I am nursing a lame left arm and shoulder, from a sudden fall my horse had on the road a few days ago. I came down under him, striking my left shoulder first, but it is only a bruise, nothing broken, and it will be all right in a few days. My health is simply splendid.

"Almost forgot to tell you of my first attempt at making preserves. It was a great success — '*Papaya* preserves.' The fruit I grew in my own garden, and I made the preserves all myself. Don't laugh! I intended to send you a sample, but had no time to pack it before I left Benque. I'll send you some of my next experiment. . . ."

But lame shoulder and all — and it was a very lame shoulder indeed — he pushed on, making a more thorough visitation of his district. It was the dry season now, and the country was more passable. But of that tropical country, perhaps we might remark here that the loveliness attributed to it by northern fancy exists only in rare instances; though some of these are wonderful enough. In general, tropical scenery is decidedly ugly and more than a little oppressive. Open country of any sort is quite the exception; the rule being a dense, rank riot of vegetation impenetrable to the eye as it is to passage for travel. The view is always narrow, and always the same; a matted wall of bushes, vines, tree trunks, with little variety of colour.

The rank odour of ever-decaying vegetation fills the air. One moves as if in a steaming, reeking prison of dull green. Except at the end of the dry season, soggy swamps abound, even in the high uplands; the home of caymans and snakes. It is a dreary, silent land, heavy, sodden, lonely; a more frightful desert because of its wild exuberance of listless sleepy life. It is a brave, bright spirit indeed that can live for years in it without being weighed down by its massive heaviness, its solitary gloom. Those who know the country must marvel always at the cheerfulness of the missionaries, and should at least suspect that the source of that cheerfulness was not merely human.

And lest we should imagine that Fr. Stanton's cheerfulness was only assumed in order to quiet possible apprehensions of his family, here is a letter written on this tour of his stations to a Father in Belize, an intimate friend, a fellow-missionary, with whom he may assuredly speak plainly:

"San Jose, Wayoutnowhere,
"St. Patrick's Day in the Mornin', 1908.

"Mil saludes from the depths of the bush on this glorious 'day we celebrate.' My Indians are firing off bombs, loud enough for St. Patrick to hear in heaven, though they had never heard of the shamrock before to-day. I don't mean to say the racket is for

Erin's patron saint; it's all for el Senor San Jose — Mr. St. Joseph.

"We are in the midst of the novena. But it is not all shooting. The days are pretty full, instructing the grown-ups singly and together, teaching prayers, catechism, and singing to the children, trying to regulate a few crooked unions, studying the ways and customs of the untutored Indian, and working away at Maya. So the days of the novena pass. I began the confessions last night. Everything in Maya — and I am still alive and kicking.

"But if ever I see civilized life again, or get to Belize in this life, please don't show me anything that even looks like a chicken on the table. My digestive apparatus is still in the ring; though if it survives the present strain of tortilla and chicken swimming in hog-grease three times a day for ten days at a stretch, I think it will deserve a gold medal.

"Friday, the 20th, I intend to be off for Holotonich, the limit of my stamping-ground in this direction. From there I shall run up to Orange Walk, New River — think I can make it in three days. I have a good reason, to steal a bottle of Mass wine from the Padres there, for the single bottle I brought with me from the Cayo will have been spent. I hope you got my letter and have sent some wine to Benque, where only two bottles remained when I left. And don't forget to send me a bottle to Orange Walk, Old River, in care of Broster, to await my arrival there, as otherwise I shall have no Mass for the rest of the trip up the river.

"After saying Hello to the Padres at O. W., New River, I have to get back to Holotonich, and from there strike across country to the Old River — ought

to make it in five days — hoping to come out at Saturday Creek, or near Coquericot. . . .

"At O. W., Old River, I may have to stay a week or so, to see if I can't get them started on their new church. From there I work up through S. Francisco, etc., to the Cayo, hoping to get back to Benque in time for Holy Week.

"I left Benque three weeks ago, and have not, of course, heard of Fr. H—— since. I hope he is all right, though the grippe or dengue or whatever you call the blamed thing was prevalent there then. . . .

"Don't know when this will reach you, as I don't know when I shall be able to get it to the nearest post-office. But I trust in the end you will get it, and in case you hear no news of me in the next six months, kindly send out an expedition to discover Spot's bones, which ought to be plainly visible somewhere in the district. Poor old horse! he deserves Christian burial; he does most of the work.

"P. S. March 26. Robert Wade Bank,
near Holotonich.

"Didn't get my epistle off to you yet. Meantime the world moves. I tave taken my little run to see M—— and N——; found K—— too at Orange Walk. . . .

"I reached here at 2:00 A.M., pretty tired. Am remaining till to-morrow for a marriage and a number of confessions and communions. To-morrow early I strike over from Holotonich to the Belize River, hoping to come out near Banana Bank. . . . Tell 'el Padre viejo' I have several scores to settle with him, if I ever meet him in the flesh. . . ."

Fr. Stanton got through to the Belize River, but poor old Spot did not; he bogged down hopelessly in the mud in the midst of the jungle, leagues away from help. Fr. Stanton rescued his saddle and saddle-bags, and sent on the one old Indian who accompanied him, to borrow a horse from a good Protestant friend, whose ranch was only half a day's ride distant.

It may be mentioned here that in their regard for Fr. Stanton, there was no distinction between Catholic and Protestant in the Colony. The Protestant planters along the river always welcomed him with delight; their houses were open to him at any time of day or night. Their purses were open too. But he had a delicacy about asking them to help out his churches, and for himself and his house he never begged; in fact, he saw no reason for begging in behalf of the latter; he had everything he needed, he said. His sister and aunt supplied him with everything he asked for his church and mission.

This was his third year at Benque Viejo, and his steady, patient work with the Indians was beginning to tell; they were frequenting the sacraments more, and attending Mass. It meant more to him than

anything else could mean. God's work was succeeding. Of course, he gave all the credit to God, but he was very happy himself to be God's instrument in it all. He had been content to plant and water, leaving the reaping to others when he had gone. It was delightful that even in his own time the harvest should begin to whiten. These beginnings of success heartened him wonderfully, gave him new brightness and courage. He did not need a rest; the work was rest for him now. So he said, and thought; and drove on with new vigour. But it was puzzling to him that attacks of sickness seemed to come with greater frequency; it does not occur to him, apparently, that he was using up even his superb vitality. In a letter written home after his last long round of forty days, he says, quite incidentally:

". . . My health is splendid, thank God. Here at Benque, however, on Palm Sunday I suddenly got an attack in my right leg, just as I did in the middle of my May trip last year, and I was laid up with it all Holy Week. As I was alone, Fr. H—— having gone to the Cayo for Holy Week, the poor Benque people had to do without some of their principal processions and ceremonies, as I only managed to crawl down to the church the last few days of the week, to perform

the most necessary functions as best I could under the circumstances. Thank God, the leg is all right again, and I am able to be around as usual.

"Work at home has been piling up whilst I was gone. I hardly know where to begin. . . ."

Sickness did not fret him or make him impatient. It was a bore, of course, as it kept him from his work. But beyond that, it was merely puzzling. Why, he *never* used to get sick! Every letter is sure to have in it somewhere, "My health is splendid;" even though it went on to say that he was out four days with fever. And when he was "out," he was really sick; trifling ailments he simply disregarded. As we shall see, it was not long before he had more and more reason to be puzzled. In the meantime, he kept on with his work.

Woods and rivers had their treacheries too, as well as their weariness. He rarely speaks of accidents, though there were many of them in his toilsome days. At most, he says in his letters from time to time, "We came through without any *serious* accidents." When he does mention some mischance, it is merely as something curious and interesting; often enough, as a thing to chuckle over; it is his old balance, and sanity, and humour. Take this letter, for instance:

"El Cayo, May 19, 1908.

"My dearest Sister:

"Pardon this paper, but I am at El Cayo to-day and have a chance to send off mail and have no paper at hand. . . .

"My health is splendid, thank God. I have just returned from another trip — had a narrow escape from being crushed to death by a tree that crashed down suddenly across the road, just touching my horse's head as I reined him up. A second more, and I would have been under it. I was alone, it was night, and quite in the midst of the forest. But my guardian angel was at my side, watching, and evidently my time had not yet come, anyhow.

"On the way back, my horse was somewhat knocked up, and night caught me in the bush, where I slept soundly till daylight. . . . Next morning, my poor horse bogged in the mud and with great difficulty I managed to get him out, both of us completely plastered with mud from head to foot. I told him I hoped I didn't look as foolish as he did.

"As it 'never rains but it pours,' my shoes went to pieces (they were pretty old, anyway) from the mud and water; the horse was so weak he could hardly move; so I had to foot it, driving the horse slowly before me with the saddle-bags, till I reached the Cayo, a distance of about twenty miles. I got here pretty foot-sore and tired, but, thank God, in splendid condition otherwise.

"You see, we don't travel in Pullman coaches or automobiles down here; but we don't need them for saving souls, and the missioner is probably just as

happy without them. I realize more and more how many things there are in civilized life as we live it in the States, which we look upon as necessities, but which are really only luxuries, as one finds out in life like this. . . ."

He was down with fever again in June, but he evidently forgot it; for when he wrote to his sister on June 30, he starts off with the old refrain:

". . . As for myself, I am in first class health, as usual. Fr. H—— has been working up the Cayo town for the past month, and I have Benque all to myself. Thanks be to God, the devotion to the Sacred Heart is beginning to take hold in the town, and whereas last year we succeeded in getting only about forty persons to the sacraments for their Easter duties, this year I had over two hundred communions during the month of June alone, whilst we have from seventy to a hundred every month. It is awful up-hill work, but God is bound to triumph. Pray hard for these poor ignorant long-neglected souls confided to my care. . . ."

Things are going fine at Benque. He has built a chickenhouse, cleared a pasture, put up more fences, enlarged the garden. It is hard to get a cook, but then " fortunately both Fr. H. and I have very good stomachs, and we get along where a person used to regular, well-cooked meals might be knocked out." There is mention, for the first

time, of a projected new house. A couple of years, or rather a couple of Rains, is a fair life for a bush house. The new house came, nearly two years later, but he never lived in it. Then follows a paragraph in the same letter, which I shall quote without comment; this is not a sketch of the Stanton family. Besides, no comment is really necessary. He continues:

". . . You speak of your plan of coming down here, when the children are grown, etc., to look after my material wants and comforts, if God spares us all so many years. Well, my dear, that would of course be fine, for me; but for you it would need a special vocation from the Lord, for Benque and its surroundings is not a place where a civilized white woman would care to pass any length of time. . . ."

That generous plan might have been carried out, "if God had spared them so many years"; but the years before him were few. The letter in which he rejected her offer is blurred and blotted.

A month later, he went again to Belize for his retreat. It was delightful, he writes, to meet some of his "own people" again, to live for a few weeks in a real house. Then back to his work, and the old round over again. In his next round of the pueblos, undertaken as soon as he got "home," oc-

curred a little incident to which he refers jokingly in one of his letters, as an instance of how even the knack of swimming may come in usefully. The facts, as supplemented by Fr. Henneman, were not precisely a joke.

It was the Rains. He had gone to visit a village called San Antonio, lying out of the path of his usual rounds. On his way he crossed the river at a ford, where he had crossed dozens of times before. When he came to the ford on his return from San Antonio, the river was higher, the current stronger. His horse was swept off his feet. Fr. Stanton slipped out of the saddle and swam beside the horse as he had often to do when crossing rivers. Some quarter of a mile below there was a dangerous fall in the river. But horse and rider both managed to reach the bank a hundred yards above the fall. Fr. Stanton caught hold of a branch to pull himself out of the stream. The branch broke and came down atop of him. He dived out of the way, but when he came up saw that the current was carrying him on to the fall. It was hopeless to try to get back again to the bank; the current was too strong; so with a prayer to his guardian angel he struck out for the deepest water, and went over the fall. Some Indians in a dorey,

hugging the bank below to come as close as they might to the fall before making the portage, saw the bearded white man come over the roaring tumble of water, and dropped their paddles in terror, crying out that it was "un brujo," a wizard, a spirit! But the "brujo" came safely through, and with long, powerful strokes cut in a great slant across the current and reached the bank. He was encumbered with clothing, boots, machete, shot-bag — though he lost his boots in the fall. He waved a hand cheerily to the Indians, and started to cut a path with his machete through the bush, travelling back along the bank. Somehow or other his horse had succeeded in landing, and he found the animal waiting for him above the fall. The real annoyance, he wrote, was that "everything inside and outside of my saddle-bags was completely soaked. But in a few hours I reached the Cayo, where the D. C. kindly lent me a complete change of clothes, and I spread all my trappings out in the sun to dry."

The letter goes on with the usual "Thank God, my health keeps splendid!" But Fr. Henneman is not at all well. Indeed, before long he had to give up Benque for good. After another couple of months alone, Fr. Stanton received a new comrade

in his place, the Reverend Arthur Versavel, S.J., who is still working away in Benque Viejo.

Naturally, the letters of these years contain many little interesting jottings about the Indians and their customs, the tropical country, its plants, insects, animals. He had not lost his quick eye for observing. But of such things perhaps we had better speak in another chapter.

CHAPTER XIII

A great deal might be written of Fr. Stanton's scientific work even during these hard years of toil as a missionary in Honduras. But if we rank that work as he ranked it, in comparison with his duty as a priest, we may be very brief indeed. When he came back to the mission, he came to work for souls. Nothing is more certain than that that was his engrossing interest for the rest of his life. He grudged any jot of time or energy that might be taken from it. Yet the scientific habits of nearly a lifetime could not be wholly ignored. He simply could not help "observing," and there were occasional moments along the jungle paths or in the swamps when he forgot everything but the interesting phenomena at hand.

Of what we may call his practical science, of his "agricultural college," his experiments with useful plants, vegetables, fruits, flowers, to which, partly as a matter of immediate necessity, partly as an indirect effort in the training of his people, he gave a great deal of his time in Benque Viejo, there is

no need to say much. They deservedly attracted some attention in the Colony, and in the end were of considerable real benefit to his people. Various attempts have since been made to imitate his teaching in several parts of the Colony. It is an obvious part of the civilizing of the Indians.

His interest in more speculative sciences was wide-spread. Anthropology, archaeology, entomology, botany, natural history in every branch, all had an attraction for him. For those who knew him, he often brought to mind Coleridge's

> "He prayeth best who loveth best
> All things both great and small:
> For the dear God Who loveth us
> He made and loveth all."

There was always a touch of the humorous, the affectionate, in his keen observation of bird and beast and insect. No amount of accurate knowledge ever dulled the swift, boyish wonder of his mind. And no marvel of structure or organization or instinct but brought him on directly to thought of "the dear God . . . Who made and loveth all." For such faith as his, Nature was indeed an open book, but an open prayer-book.

Don't fancy a grotesque, dreaming missionary-

naturalist, with a bible in one hand and a magnifying glass in the other — the staple butt of humorists. Fr. Stanton was infinitely removed from that. He was decidedly a sturdy, vigorous, four-square man, with a most masculine directness of character and purpose and accomplishment. Without any swagger or bluster, he might have ridden in a troop of "The Rough Riders" and been at home. Religion, faith, were a flame in his heart; not a badge on his sleeve, nor a frothy sentiment in his mouth. One could as readily fancy him flying through the air as fancy him prosing piously over a flower or a bird. If his thought was coloured by the creative vision that faith gives, his speech, with the well-chewed pipe-stem in his teeth, was coloured mainly by humour — which, after all, is not such a bad expression of faith. He saw God in all the world, not as a mystic sees Him, but as any real Christian may see Him; and he spoke of Him with the reticences which convention (foolish or not) has put upon a gentleman.

Perhaps he knew as much about the Maya and Lacandon Indians as any man of his time, not of their blood, could know. He might have written a very interesting volume on them. But he studied them primarily as their very level-headed pastor,

that he might know how to make Christianity a more actual and vital thing for them. Folk-lore, traditions, customs, their immediate ways of life — he was steeped in them. He had no time to dig up Maya ruins and inscriptions, but he knew all of them that had already been unearthed in his district. He took pictures of them, gathered notes for a lecture on them.

He knew most of the immense variety of trees and plants that surrounded him, their habits, their uses as food or medicine, their conditions of growth, so far as observation and the knowledge possessed by the Indians could inform him. Though he never went out of his way to study these things, nor ever for an hour neglected his real work for them, neither did he let pass the thousands of incidental opportunities for picking up information. He studied only as he rode or tramped or paddled, but he studied extremely well.

It was living things, as always, that interested him most. He not merely kept up, he improved, his acquaintance with snakes, insects, beasts of the forest. Every journey through the bush gave him new information, and often specimens. He had a few books, good ones; and he pored over them and his specimens at night, when his day's work

was done and his people were all snug in their beds. Nor, hidden away though he was in the bush, could he drop out of the world of science that had begun to know him. His correspondence was considerable. And though he might find no little difficulty in getting any sort of box in which to ship his specimens to the Smithsonian Institution or to scientific friends, his sister saw to it that at least he had neatly engraved cards to accompany them.

A ride with him through the bush would delight any live man. He seemed to see everything. His quick eyes caught, as he rode along, a thousand interesting incidents of animal or insect life. The woods were not dull to him, or to any one with him.

Once, when he was caught by night in the bush, and his horse left him during the night, and he had to trudge bare-foot through the dawn some twenty miles, fasting, wet, in the rain, with fifty pounds of saddle and saddle-bags on his shoulders, he saw on the way a good-sized wowlah, or boa, gorging down a big frog. He was very tired, he had not eaten for more than twenty-four hours, he had a good deal of fever; but he put his load down and stood by to watch the snake. The old fellow, as he said, was mighty slow about it. He could not

wait. So he caught up the snake, frog and all, and staggered on. He got into the Cayo at seven o'clock, had the church bell rung, and threw himself down for a few minutes' rest. The fever was much worse. The District Commissioner heard the bells, and said to his wife: "One of the Fathers must have come, and we shall have Mass." They found the Father a very sick man, tried to persuade him that he ought to eat something, ought not to say Mass. But the Father was able to get up laughingly and insist on saying Mass. "Why, it's Sunday!" he said. And he told them about the snake, which he had tied to his saddle. Then he said Mass, though at the end he could scarcely stand. The D. C. said, "What an enthusiastic naturalist!" His wife said, "What a zealous priest!" We might almost let the story of Fr. Stanton as a scientist rest here; the two sayings give you the heart of the matter.

But there are no end of stories about him and his snakes. He was as great a "snake doctor" to the Indians of Benque Viejo and the District as he had formerly been to the Creoles and Caribs. Often, if they came across a big snake near the town, or near wherever he chanced to be, instead

of killing it, they ran to tell him, so that if he wished, he might capture it alive.

He came into his garden at Benque Viejo one day, holding by the tail a very angry snake, so long that with uplifted arm he could just keep its head off the ground. He called out to Fr. Henneman, "Get one of those cleft sticks, and catch his head!" "Is he poisonous?" Fr. Henneman asked repeatedly; but Fr. Stanton merely kept telling him to get a stick and hold down its head. When they had secured the snake, and Fr. Stanton was examining its jaws, Fr. Henneman again asked, "Is he poisonous?" And this time he got an answer, given with a grin — "Why, that's just what I wanted to see! . . . Yes, he is!"

With snakes he was particularly fearless, though he seemed never to be much bothered by fear of anything, for that matter. He gave one the impression of being quite familiar and on easy terms with most beasts. Now and then he got paid out for his familiarity. He was riding, one day, along a bush-path, when he met an ant-bear. The animal sat up in the path, undaunted, and faced him. He dismounted, eyed the chap a while, and decided to bring him home alive that he might study his ways.

The little ant-bear, which is about four feet long, with a great, bushy tail more than half as long as its body, reared like a real bear, claws out. Fr. Stanton sparred with him, as if boxing, then with a quick lunge caught the beast's tail and swung him dangling in the air. With his free hand he drew his machete, and struck the ant-bear a smart blow on the head with the flat of the blade, and stunned him. Then he put him in the empty corn-sack and fastened him securely to the cantle of the saddle. Old Spot, his horse, made no objection whatever. He mounted, let the reins drop on Spot's neck, got out his breviary and began to read his office as he jogged along. Suddenly Spot screamed, and reared almost straight in the air, and pranced about on two legs. With a great deal of difficulty, caught as he was between saddle-bags behind and rifle in front of him, Fr. Stanton managed to dismount; and with even more difficulty succeeded in calming Spot a little — wondering all the while what had got into the steady old animal. Of course, Mr. Ant-bear had waked up, and *he* had got into old Spot. Reluctantly, Fr. Stanton had to kill the little beast, and postpone his study of live ant-bears to a more favourable occasion.

One scarcely need be told that a good "ob-

server" must be well endowed with patience. Fr. Stanton's equipment in that respect was quite extraordinary. Not merely had he the quiet necessary to watch details carefully, and the persistence to be always on the look-out for opportunities of investigation; he had that genuine "possessing of one's soul" which is considerably more than a mere scientist's endurance. The interest and fascination of the work may explain a scientist's patience with natural processes. But it takes, one may fancy, a little more than scientific interest to keep one patient when the natural processes are unmistakably at one's own expense.

In the course of his accumulation of wealth at Benque Viejo, Fr. Stanton became the proud owner of a chair. In no great time, the so-called white ants, the termites, took over the possession of that chair in their own quiet way. Without any fuss or ostentation, working away, as they always do, unnoticed in the central core of the wood, they quietly ate out everything of a few legs of the chair except the paint. The resultant collapse of the chair really called for rather more than scientific patience. But Fr. Stanton gathered himself up from the floor, and without even a naughty word, but with many chuckles instead, examined their craftsmanship, so

to speak, in the most eager spirit of a scientific observer. It was quite the same when the "wee-wees," an extremely ravenous sort of ant, ate up the better part of a tiger skin which he was curing to send home;[1] or when the same "wee-wees" in one night destroyed some fruit trees that he had planted and was watching anxiously as an experiment. He had taken particular pains to guard these trees, and as a special protection against "wee-wees" had put a thick ring of pine-pitch around the trunk of each tree. He saw them green and flourishing on one evening, and woke to find them utterly stripped of leaves in the morning. The ants had decided that those trees were about ready for them, and had come in numbers to the feast. The rings of pitch delayed them hardly at all. Ant number one went up and stuck himself in the pitch, ant number two climbed over him and stuck beyond; a score of ants made a bridge; the bridges too were scores; and the army passed over without further trouble. Fr. Stanton was a great deal more delighted over the cleverness of the "wee-wees" than he was distressed over the loss of his trees.

But I am afraid we are running off the scientific

[1] He had shot the tiger, or jaguar, just outside his house, where the beast had come prowling. Rather eloquent of the intimacy between Benque Viejo and the jungle!

track altogether on this line of thought. It could hardly be science which made him take so cheerfully the uninvited visit of a neighbour's bull, who came one day in his absence and ate every living thing in his hard-won garden. Fr. Stanton was naturally a high-tempered man, but he only grinned when he came home to his desolate vegetable patch, and lit a fresh pipe and said, "Well, I guess he needed it. There isn't much decent pasturage around Benque."

No, he did not abandon his scientific interest; it remained; but in the years it had got covered up by a much nobler growth. In the missionary, it could only peep out here and there. He did, indeed, look forward to the possibility of doing something more in that line, when his mission work had been well established and the field of work for souls better manned. In the meantime, the only rather serious work of a scientific sort that he could find time and energy for was the completion of his notes begun years before. This he could do, and did, at night, in his little thatched hut. Laboriously, carefully, he wove them into a book; two volumes, on "The Fauna of British Honduras." It was a very accurate book, but popular in style, written for the general public as well as for scientists. It was completed, ready for the printer, but it was never

printed. It was merely lost. That is all we can say of it.

Perhaps only one thing more need be mentioned in this brief chapter: his notable generosity in sharing with others the results of his work in science. He had very little indeed of the vanity which we may suppose scientists, in common with other men, to possess. None of his work was done to gain praise; though he accepted the encouragement of praise when it came, as simply as a child. Provided the work was done, it mattered very little to him who got the credit for it. His collections, notes, and the like, he placed freely at the disposal of any one who asked his assistance. Of this many instances might be specified.

But in reality the scientific days were done when he returned to British Honduras. It might seem as if God had accepted with a strangely complete literalness the sacrifice he had made in relinquishing his splendid opportunities for entomological and other scientific work in Manila. He came as God's knight to the mission, on a chivalrous quest for souls. It was as if at the touch of the accolade all lesser distinctions fell from him. Souls God gave him; He gave him a fine part in His own work; perhaps part of the price to be paid for that was even

the very odd loss of his scientific book. Perhaps God wished that the memory of Fr. Stanton, with us who knew him, should be supremely that of a priest: a clean fierce flame, in which there was not even the colouring of earthly matter.

CHAPTER XIV

The year 1908 swung on to its close, with the usual round of quiet work. His new comrade, Fr. Versavel, not yet quite acclimatized, had to go down to Belize for about a month, leaving him alone during the Christmas season. In his letter home for Christmas he mentions this illness of his compnaion with sympathy, and rather marvels a little that he himself has been so wonderfully favoured in the matter of health. To read the letter, one would think that he had never had a day of illness in his three years at Benque Viejo. "Thank God, who has given me such a vigorous constitution, I have been as well here, and am in as good health to-day, after more than three years, as I have ever been in my life." Of course, it is just a passing reference; except as matter for gratitude, the question of his health does not occur to him at all.

Christmas in Benque Viejo is a busy time, but not very edifying. The town is full of *chicleros,* "who come in from the bush now to spend a month or more in beastly drunkenness until they go out

again to their work of bleeding the *chicle* trees to supply Americans with chewing gum." The termites have been eating up everything but the tin-opener and his machete; they balk at metal only. He is going out on his rounds again after the holidays. It is a tired letter, cheerful enough, but rather dull; but he does not say he is tired. Just keep on praying for his work; that is the main thing; that comes back again and again.

His rounds took him all the way to San Jose. When he returned in February, he wrote that it had been "a stiff trip, soaking wet nearly all the time — had to swim across a swift river with boots and clothes on — all day in the saddle, wet — caught one night in the jungle, in a swamp, pitch dark, knee deep in mud, raining all the time. The horse could not get a step further. So both of us, plastered with mud and drenched from above, passed the long night till daylight showed where we were. Clouds of mosquitos and swarms of fiery ants had taken their fill of me, whilst the blood-sucking vampire bats had tapped my poor horse. We got out all right, and I had the consolation of being told by the first Indian I met that three big tigers (jaguars) had been killed near by during the last month. . . . I shall be going the same round again

next month, but then the trails will be better, as the dry season is beginning. . . . Sunday is the 28th — thirty-nine years old! Just to think! I can hardly realize it. It does not seem so long since we used to have the candy-pullings on that day. . . ."

And he goes on cheerfully with his plans. He is going to raise ducks, Indian Runners, if they will send him some eggs! Can it be done? Would they survive in the post? But there is something wanting in the letter. He does not say, "My health, thank God, is splendid!" It is significant. Indeed, he will never say it again. The nearest he can get to it will be one rather feeble, "*Otherwise* my health is splendid." Not that he complains, not yet. He admitted to one or two who noted his rather drawn look that he was not feeling very well. But, of course, it is nothing serious; it would be ridiculous to mention it in a letter.

He set out in March on another long journey. It was in the dry season. Travelling should have been easier. But somehow, it did not seem to be. He had no opportunity to write during that time; but he told the writer, in a puzzled way, that that particular San Jose trip seemed to bristle with difficulties. He got lost rather badly a few times. Once he had to chop a path with his machete for

four or five hours, going ahead and leading his horse; and the tangle of bush that they went through rubbed off his blanket and shot-bag from the saddle; his breviary and knife and pipe and tobacco were in the shot-bag. He had to sleep out in the bush a couple of nights. The commissary department was unusually inefficient. In addition, he "did not feel very well." In fact, he believed he must have rheumatism, because he had dreadful pains in his back.

That last was a first hint. Of course, he said it with the old grin, and joked about it. It was impossible for any one to take alarm at the matter, the way he put it. It was, he made one feel, just another bit of the humour of the bush; part of the good-natured "cussedness" of things, which so often sees to it that "it never rains but it pours." One scarcely thought to ask him if the pains still continued. He did look rather wretched — but then, he had been working very hard.

He got back to Benque Viejo in the beginning of April. His companion had returned from Belize. There was a third Father in the District now, with headquarters at the Cayo. He was delighted. Everything was going splendidly. The District was really beginning to round into shape. They

would do wonders now, the three of them. In the meantime, he must get at that garden and pasture again. The weeds were getting up. It was hard to keep things going when one had to be away in the bush so much of the time. Besides, a little work would do his rheumatism good. Yes, he still had a little pain in his back. Then, suddenly, on April 13, 1909, comes this note to home, scrawled in pencil:

". . . Just at present I am on the flat of my back in bed, with an attack of something, apparently acute articular rheumatism. The seat of the trouble seems to be pretty well down the spine, at the articulations of the hip bones. Though I had felt some pain and soreness before, about ten days ago it struck me fiercely whilst I was bending down to bind some plants in the pasture. The shooting pain was unbearable. I simply squirmed on the ground and screeched like a wild Indian till it passed. It took me about fifteen minutes, with great pain and difficulty, to get to my feet. I got to the house, where I have been since, unable to do anything. There is no doctor here, of course, but we have sent word to Belize to the medico there and shall get some advice by next week's mail.

" Thank God, the thing is improving slowly, and with great care I can move a bit in bed without getting another attack. I trust that in a few days more I can get to my feet and be about. Otherwise I am in splendid health — no fever.

". . . For over three years and a half, working in

these jungles, I have had perfect health, so I can't complain when the Lord sends me some little pain to remind me I am human.

"I am getting tired trying to write on my back, so must say good-bye for a while. Pray that the Lord may put me on my feet quickly and give me strength to work many years more for His glory. . . ."

How much torture there was in those last few expeditions through the bush, one may fairly guess from this simple letter. If he said little or nothing about it before, it was from no petty vanity, it was not out of the braggadocio with which strong men often mask any physical weakness. He was in this, as in all things, most simple and honest. Any swaggering assumption of callousness or indifference was impossible to a man of his character and humour. He merely did not *think* much of pain or discomfort, did not dwell upon it in his own mind, and never let it affect at all the resolute working of his will. That was why he kept silent concerning his pain and distress. When they forced his attention unmistakably, and he realized that this was no common discomfort of his hard life, then he spoke out plainly. There is a world of humility in the man who writes simply that he "squirmed on the ground and screeched like a wild Indian" with pain.

The advice came from the doctor in Belize "by the next week's mail," and was, of course, a sensible order for Fr. Stanton to come down to Belize at once and put himself in his hands. But there was so much to do. Besides, he had to begin plans for his new house; which was much needed. Then, this was the dry season; no launch could get up the river; he must go on horseback or in a dorey. Anyway, his back really was better. Perhaps it all came from the Rains. But his superior added his urging to that of the doctor, and six weeks later, at the end of May he went down, on horseback. It took him four days, but he had to sleep in the bush only once on the way; and that under circumstances that amused him. He had hoped to make the ranch of a good Protestant friend before nightfall. But night caught him still at some distance, he could not tell just how far, from the place. He was in considerable pain, which may have muddled his wits. Suddenly he heard through the night the loud bray of an ass belonging to his friend's ranch. Obviously, he was near the place. But in which direction? The jungle makes it hard to locate the source of sounds. Was he on the right side of the river? Was he near the river, or away from it? He could not settle how to go; so he did what is, in the cir-

FATHER STANTON, BELIZE, 1909

cumstances, the most sensible thing to do in the bush: he unsaddled his horse and lay down where he was. Morning showed him his friend's place just across the river from where he had passed the night. A hail would have brought a boat and lights. "There we were," he said, "a braying ass on one side of the river, and a bray-less ass on the other, and we couldn't get together!"

No one took his illness very seriously; least of all did he. Rheumatism was the common lay verdict. The doctor made another guess. In the meantime, Fr. Stanton was resting by pushing on his plans and preparations for his new house. On June 4, 1909, he wrote to his aunt:

"Just a line to-day, to reassure you about my health. I am all right again, the pain in my back almost entirely gone — as you may easily imagine, since I have just come down from Benque to Belize on horseback, a four days' ride, to see the doctor. On examination he told me immediately what was the matter: injury of the main sciatic nerve from the pressure of a rather dilapidated truss that I have been wearing. In a few days more I shall be as good as new again.

"I am busy working out plans, etc., for a civilized house at Benque. It is going to be a big job, but I hope to finish it this year. The main timbers I have already got out of the forest, but most of the rest of the material will have to be transported from Belize. . . ."

He remained in Belize four or five weeks. The doctor was rather baffled by his case. He needed an X-ray examination to make certain how his spine was affected; and Belize did not possess a Roentgen apparatus. Fr. Stanton insisted he was feeling better; the thing, whatever it was, would pass away; he must get back to his mission and his new house. The new house was a real venture; but Mother Katharine Drexel had come to his aid with a generous donation; and his relatives, and friends, in the States and in Belize, contributed more. He did very little begging — a task for which he had no liking, of course. Nor did he need to beg much; those who knew him were glad to help him; and with his usual nonchalance in money matters he was perfectly content to trust Providence to any extent. He had laid out his orders for material by the end of June, and he was eager to get back home. On July 4, he wrote to one of his comrades in the Cayo District:

". . . My back is all right, that is, it scarcely bothers me at all now. All it needs is a little rest, which it is getting to its full satisfaction here in Belize, much to the Doc's satisfaction too. I can't easily stand a pitpan trip of eight days just at present, but if you fellows don't pray for high water up the river, I'm afraid I shall have to make a break for the bush in pitpan,

dorey, or 'walk-foot.' For I will not hang around here more than a week longer at the most.

"You must be hard up for provisions by this time. If something doesn't turn up within a very few days, I shall try to shove something along by pitpan if possible and run the risks. . . .

"Just met Willie Stewart at Melhado's, and he tells me *The Cutter* is going to try to get up this week. If so, I think Fr. Wallace and I shall try to get passage.

"But it is breakfast hour in Belize now — I cannot give you any more definite arrangements, as the mail is about to close. . . ."

Evidently, the men up country did not pray hard enough. The Rains had begun, but the river rose very slowly. No launch would venture as yet into its upper reaches. It might be a week, it might be two weeks or more, before the flood would be high enough for that. So the Superior of the mission and Fr. Stanton loaded a pitpan with tinned provisions, flour, etc., and set out on the journey.

The only way to understand the discomfort of a long voyage in a pitpan is to make such a voyage. Fancy a flat-bottomed craft, fashioned of two great logs hollowed out and joined together; some thirty to forty feet long, three to four feet wide; square-ended, of very shallow draft, the bottom sloping up at bow and stern so as to glide smoothly over the water. It is loaded amidships with a huge pile

of goods, leaving only a small space forward for the paddlers and a still smaller space at the stern for the luckless passengers. Its high load makes it crank; capsizes are distressingly common. One must sit quietly, as the craft lurches and staggers up against the current. There is scarcely room for one to change position. Standing or moving about is utterly out of the question. In the rapid shallows the crew stand up to pole; in the swifter, narrow reaches of the river, where the water tumbles and boils amongst the rocks, they must take a line ahead, make it fast to a tree on the bank, and drag the pitpan slowly forward. It is in such places that cargoes are lost. Let the current catch them but a moment broadside on, and over goes the pitpan.

Eight weary days of this they had before they reached the Cayo. They had no awning; the sun beat down upon them, the sudden, torrential rains drenched them. Seven nights they slept in the pitpan, cramped, without room enough to stretch out; only one night they got ashore and slept in an abandoned hut. Their food gave out, mysteriously enough, for they had put sufficient rations aboard at starting. The crew mutinied. They had to beg provisions from little planters along the river.

Fr. Stanton bore the journey badly. The pain in his back grew worse, as he had to admit to his companion. But he did not complain. He joked about it, he kept wonderfully cheerful. If a sharper spasm brought a groan to his lips, the groan ended in a grinning burlesque. He would be all right as soon as they got out of that blooming Pullman. He was going right into his garden the moment they got to Benque, and he was not going to *sit down* for a month. The old back needed exercise, that was all; a daily dose of hoe and machete.

They had not dared to open any of their boxes of provisions during the journey — for fear they might disappear altogether. The danger of capsizing was not at any time the only risk goods ran in transit by pitpan. When they reached the Cayo, they arranged for mules to carry their goods to Benque Viejo. But even between the Cayo and Benque there might be strange vanishings. A note of July 20, to the Father at the Cayo, is typical of a score of notes on similar occasions:

". . . Feliciano says you looked for milk amongst my goods and could not find any. I myself saw amongst my boxes at Chindo's at least *one case* of evaporated milk. I didn't open the box to see if there was actually anything in it, but it looked all right, and

it is on the bill. If you can't find it, try to buy a few tins of any kind of milk to bring out with you when you come Friday, as we have run out entirely. . . ."

The pain in his back never left him, but now it was not so intense, and besides, as he said, he was getting used to it. His notes and letters of the next few months make no mention of it at all. He is busy with plans for his house, with getting his garden into shape again, with the routine of work amongst his people. In the beginning of September he even gets up a party, at the request of the District Commissioner, to inspect some Maya ruins near by.

The Government had lately appointed a surgeon for the Caya District, a young Englishman who promptly became a close friend of Fr. Stanton, and of course gave him his professional services. He could not make sure of his ailment, with the limited facilities at his command, and from the start he urged him to go to the States for more adequate examination and treatment. But Fr. Stanton pooh-poohed that idea. There was nothing seriously wrong, he was sure. And then, there was so much work to do. It was simply impossible even to think of leaving Benque. His companion remonstrated with him for working so hard — and to his astonish-

ment, was sharply rebuked. It was the only time Fr. Stanton had even momentarily lost his temper with one of his comrades. But his companion did not misunderstand; he saw in the fact only a new symptom of the now ancient ailment. The man's nerves were showing the strain of long months of suffering. He was tough and enduring, he would not give up, but the pain was cornering him.

In the second week of September he had to go to the Cayo on business. It was during the Rains, and of course the road was in its usual horrible condition. His horse could not carry him through the mud, and he had to dismount and flounder along behind, holding to the horse's tail. A week later he writes to the Father at the Cayo:

"I have been all knocked out since Sunday. . . . Only a little malaria, says the Doctor, and I am nearly over it now. It's 'el mal que anda.' Doc says I must keep quiet for a few days more — hard thing — and I'm filling up with quinine.

"I got out safely last week, at just 9:00 P.M. Old Brownie led the way in the dark, and with a good grip at the end of his tail I was guided slowly along the road. . . ."

That is all he has to say about himself. The note goes on with directions about some goods that are expected from Belize, messages about some plants

he is to get from a man at the Cayo, about lumber for the new house, and the like. His hurried notes home do not even mention his illness. Only on October 6, in a brief apology for not writing more, does he refer to the matter at all:

". . . Am still alone, and extremely busy. Besides, have been somewhat unwell for the past month, but nothing serious. Am feeling somewhat better these days. Plenty of trouble trying to build a house back here in the bush.

" Hope to be myself next week, and shall write more details of my work. Love to all."

In the meantime his superior in Belize had written him to come down and see the doctor there again; he was worried about him. But Fr. Stanton was unable to make the journey until the middle of October. Then he went down on horseback, and nearly collapsed when he reached Belize. Still his courage and cheerfulness deceived every one. It was impossible to believe that there was anything seriously the matter. The doctor was as puzzled as the Cayo surgeon had been. Lacking an X-ray examination, his various diagnoses were only guesses in the dark. The one obvious thing was that Fr. Stanton was in constant pain, and that his wiry strength was wearing down. The doctor again urged a voyage back

to the States. But the new house at Benque was actually begun; he *couldn't* go now. He remained only a week in Belize, more occupied and concerned even then with business affairs than with the doctor's conjectures as to what ailed him. The day before his return, he wrote a long letter to his sister, full of talk about the new house, in the course of which he says:

". . . To tell the truth, I have not had quite my usual strength and health since last March, but thank God, I believe I am all right again now. My great trouble now is worry about the building of our new house. . . .

". . . It is late, and I must be packing my saddle-bags to start early in the morning on my journey back to the bush. I shall probably reach Benque by next Sunday. . . ."

The writer rode out with him a bit on his way back, and saw his face twisted with pain. But he said it was no great matter, and chatted cheerfully, and made plans for a great exploring expedition that they two would undertake when the dry season came again. With three priests now in the Cayo District, he thought he could get off for a few weeks to have a look through the unexplored hinterland of the Colony. He had hopes of finding open country, good pasturage, perhaps lakes, in that no-man's

land. They would carry a transit-compass, perhaps gather data for a future railroad. They would map the country. By that time he surely would be quite strong again. They parted, and he rode on between the tangle of mangrove with his hand at his back and a little unsteady in the saddle.

The man's pluck was indomitable. Four days' ride brought him to Benque. He stayed a few days, to attend to his people there; then he set off, Rains and all, on the round of his pueblos. He had been reproaching himself, when in Belize, for having neglected them so long. Hearing him talk, one would think it had been only preoccupation with his new house that had kept him away from his other work. Apparently, the fact that he had been unwell never entered his mind as an excuse. How dreary was that long journey to the sick man, we may only conjecture. We have no details of it. It lasted about a month. It was in the worst season of the year. On December 2, 1909, he writes to his aunt:

"I am just back from one of my trips amongst the smaller Indian villages of the district, and am somewhat tired out, but it is mail day and if I don't write to-day I may not be able to get off any Christmas letter. Let me begin by wishing you and all the family a Merry Christmas and a New Year filled with the choicest blessings of the new-born Babe of Bethlehem.

"How time does fly! More than four years have passed since I came back here into the wilds of the Cayo bush, and still I am alive and well, and still able to work — thanks to the good God who has protected me from a thousand dangers of body and soul. . . .

That is the tone of the whole letter, a marvelling gratitude. There have been difficulties, but God brought himself and his companions through them. He praises the courage and generosity of his companions. God has been so good to them all.

". . . Pray for us," he concludes, "That the Lord may give us strength and zeal to work hard for His glory and the salvation of the poor souls buried in these wildernesses. The difficulties are great, but the Lord is greater than all. . . ."

Not a word about ill-health. Not even any good-humoured chat about the last trip. He is "somewhat tired out," that is all. Well, he was more "tired out" than he knew. It was his last round of the mission stations.

On December 14 he wrote a very jolly letter to Belize. He is still enthusiastic about that exploring expedition for the next dry season. He is sending down "a fine skin of a *tigrillo,* shot just outside our fence; also a skin of a large boa-constrictor. We are just lying in wait these nights for another

tigrillo, that carried off three hens and a chick the other night from our next-door neighbour. . . ." After more small talk about affairs in Benque, and the new house, the letter concludes:

". . . Perhaps I shall bring those skins down myself. . . . It seems I am doomed for another trip to Belize — doctor's orders. There seem to be a few screws still loose in my spinal column, and Doc says there is no monkey wrench in Benque that can tighten them up. He prescribes at least ten hours a day stretched on the flat of my back — just think! Well, I *am* on the flat of my back at the present moment, and this must serve as excuse for this horrible scribble. . . ."

But he actually got up on Christmas day, and said Mass for his people. It cost him great effort; the pain was intense; he could get through only one Mass. His companion found him afterward in their hut, with tears in his eyes that he could not say his three Masses on Christmas day. The next day he wrote to his aunt:

"Just a line to let you know I am alive and that I received your Christmas letter. . . .

"As for myself, I must confess that I am stretched on the flat of my back at present. The doctor of the District has examined me several times, and says that a couple of segments of my spinal column have rotated

out of their normal position and that there appears to be a renal tumour in my left side. This can only be determined, he says, by thorough examination under the X-rays — which cannot be done in the colony.

"At any rate, I am going to try to get down to Belize this week, and see what Fr. Superior and the doctors in Belize have to say about the case. The doctor here has prescribed that in the meantime I keep stretched straight out on my back on a hard bed, as much as possible. So here I am. We shall see what the Lord has in store for me now — perhaps a few weeks' rest in Belize, perhaps a journey to St. Louis, or at least as far as New Orleans — who knows!

"After I get to Belize, I shall let you know any news. To lie about doing nothing is very hard; but I should not complain. My hand is tired, writing in my peculiar position; so with a Happy New Year to all the dear ones, I shall say good-bye for a while. . . ."

He came down to Belize, though the journey was torture. The doctors consulted and debated and examined, and could not come to any certain conclusion, beyond that he must go at once to the States. A new superior had just come from St. Louis to replace the former superior. It was decided that Fr. Stanton should accompany the latter home. The mail steamer had no room for them. They booked passage on a tramp bound for Mobile, to sail on January 6. He had no clothes save the rough khaki and flannels that he wore in the bush,

and we had to lend him a collection of garments. He made a joke of trading his gun for a coat with one of us, and so on. The day before they left Belize, he wrote his last note to the Father who was to be in charge of the District in his place, turning over to him with cheerful heartiness his plans and his responsibilities. He was in great pain, but he wrote gaily as ever:

"Well, old man, I am off for a while. The doctors have ordered me to the States by the first steamer, say I should go right up to St. Louis, where they can rip me up without any difficulty and haul out of my anatomy some sort of cyst, which the Doc says probably entered by means of infected *marana*. He says I may be able to return in about a month. Dios quiera! . . ."

It is no discredit to the doctors in Belize, considering the circumstances, to say that they did not know what they were talking about; but they did not know. The man's body was ringed with a monstrous growth of cancer; and he was not to return in a month; he was never to return.

CHAPTER XV

This is the last chapter: let us go through with it swiftly: it is a painful chapter, of the dragging tortures of one dying of sarcoma. Yet one is tempted, too, to delay upon it, for the sake of the superhuman courage, the heart-breaking gaiety and brightness with which Fr. Stanton went through these last terrible months.

He and Fr. Wallace sailed from Belize on Friday, January 6. The steamer was small, with meagre accommodations for passengers. They struck abnormally rough weather in the Gulf, bucking their way through a savage north-easter. Fr. Stanton was in constant and dreadful pain. Every sea-voyage had always brought him a few days of sickness, and he dreaded it now. He begged his companion to pray that he might be spared that additional distress. And pray they did, with the result that Fr. Wallace, usually a good sailor, was sick for two; Fr. Stanton escaping entirely. Their steamer came into Mobile five days later, her decks and masts coated with ice: a strange phenomenon for those

latitudes, and testimony sufficient of the violence of the storm they had weathered.

They arrived in port at nine in the evening, with a prospect of having to remain aboard until morning. But Fr. Stanton was in such bad shape that his companion feared he might die, and so made vigorous efforts to rout out the collector of the port and get permission to go ashore at once. They stopped only a day in Mobile, as Fr. Stanton insisted on pushing on directly to St. Louis. From his bed, in Mobile, he wrote to his sister:

"Mobile, Ala., Jan 12, 1910.

"My dear little sister:

"You are astonished to hear of me in Mobile; but here I am, back for a while at least under the stars and stripes. I arrived here about nine o'clock last night, accompanied by Fr. Wallace, on the SS. *Belize,* after a very rough passage from Belize. To-night, at 8:40, we take the train direct to St. Louis, and expect to get there Friday evening.

"And what does it all mean? Well, you will remember what I wrote in my last letter from Benque Viejo. As soon as I got down to Belize, and the doctor there had examined my case again, he told Fr. Superior to get me off by the first boat for the States, to have the operation performed which alone could cure me. Fr. Wallace, who had just been replaced as Superior of the mission by Fr. Mitchell, was packing up to return, so we came together.

"You and Auntie must not be frightened at this, as the operation which has to be performed is not very dangerous, and the doctor says that within a month I shall be out of the hospital and be as good as new again. They have to cut out of my side what they call a hydatid cyst, which seems to be the cause of my trouble, and when that is done the twist in my spine will probably right itself gradually. Pray that everything may turn out well.

"'Man proposes, God disposes,' but as far as I know at present I shall probably be on my way back to Belize and the bush some time in February or perhaps March. On my return I would naturally sail from New Orleans. I should like of course to go round through San Antonio to see you all once again, but it is a good deal out of the way, and I don't know whether the poor mission can stand the extra expense after all the expenses of my journey and the medical and hospital bills. But there is still time to think of such things, and no hurry at present.

"I shall of course write promptly after getting to St. Louis, and let you know how I am getting along.

"I feel half frozen to death here in Mobile after my years in the tropical bush. St. Louis must be much colder. But the doctor says I shall recuperate from the operation much easier up in St. Louis than further south. . . ."

There is not a word about the pain he was suffering. Indeed, all who dealt with him during that long time of torture brought away an imperishable memory of his patience and positive cheerfulness.

The jolting of the railway carriage added to his pain during the weary night and day to St. Louis. But when his companion, eager for some means of distracting him, introduced to him a chance acquaintance on the train, a Jew engaged in entomological work for one of the Government bureaus, Fr. Stanton chatted so gaily and interestingly for two hours that the man could scarcely believe that he was ill. But he was very ill indeed. Reaching St. Louis almost in collapse, he was driven to the University. The next day he was taken to St. John's Hospital, in desperate condition.

But with his astonishing vitality he rallied from the ill effects of the long journey. A week after his entrance into the hospital he wrote again to his sister, briefly recounting what had happened since his last letter. He continues then:

"I wanted to write sooner, but there was no news to tell you. A thorough examination is being made by the best doctors in the city. To-day or to-morrow they will make an X-ray examination, after which Dr. E—— will make his diagnosis and we shall know what is the matter and what has to be done further. Until the diagnosis is made we can only keep our souls in patience.

"I have every care and comfort possible here under the kind Sisters of Mercy and the nurses of the hospital. . . .

"I can't write long without getting tired, as the doctors will not let me move out of bed, so I must stop for the present, and await the developments of next week. Tell Auntie not to be disturbed. But I want you all to make a novena to the Blessed Virgin, to finish on the feast of the Presentation. This will probably be the most critical time for me, and the feast just fits in. Any little prayers, say, three Hail Marys, will do. If you can all say them together every day, so much the better. . . ."

His friends in St. Louis flocked about him. He showed a cheerful countenance to all, joked and made little of his illness. In fact, the chief physician at the hospital said afterward that Fr. Stanton's steady courage actually added to the difficulty of diagnosing his illness properly. But some of his friends sent alarming reports to his family. The last letter he was able to write, a scrawl in pencil, was to encourage his sister and aunt. It was dated with the month only, but it must have been written at the end of January or the beginning of February.

"You see I am still alive and able to scribble, so you need not bother about funeral arrangements yet. I got your letter yesterday, and am glad to see you have plenty of common-sense and will not allow yourself to be flurried by sensational notes from N—— or any one else. . . .

"And how am I now? Well, feeling fairly well to-

day, with a fair appetite and not much pain, getting the best of nursing, being examined carefully and thoroughly by the best specialist in St. Louis. What more could one desire under my circumstances? My case has been somewhat puzzling to the doctors, and they are taking all possible means to avoid any mistake; hence the apparent delay. Much better thus than to rush at a radical operation which might complicate matters more.

"They have concluded not to perform any operation for the present, thinking the disease can be controlled more easily by other forms of treatment. Just what treatment is best they are discussing now. . . .

"So you see, whilst the wise men are in doubt all we have to do is to be patient and await results. In the meantime, any number of nuns and convent children and friends are praying for me, and so we have every reason to hope for success.

"Keep your soul in peace then, my dear, and tell Auntie not to worry. Neither of you could do a particle of good for me here. All you could do would be to visit me for a moment or two; and a visit will be much more enjoyable when I meet you all in San Antonio some time in the not too distant future, if God wills. . . ."

However, the doctors did know definitely what his disease was. They merely did not think it well to tell him. As for an operation, that was out of the question: there was no hope: the cancer had developed too far for that. By now the malignant tumours, spreading along the lymphatics, had filled

nearly the whole of the abdominal cavity, and were shortly to mount up and attack his throat.

He had no fever, nor was he ever quite delirious. But as his pain and his weakness increased, his mind wandered. He was back once more in the bush. He cried out about "his boys — his poor boys!" He was labouring through the swamps, and he could not reach them. But at any time the name of Jesus, or a little aspiration, brought him back to his senses, smiling, cheerful, praying.

One of his comrades praised him for his courage. He lifted up the crucifix, which he kept always in his hands, and whispered, "It's not courage, Jim; it's faith!" Well, it was both; the one had become as much part of the man as the other.

He fought against letting his family know how badly he was. But toward the end of February he gave in. They were informed and came on to St. Louis at once. The end was not far now. But how weary the road that remained! His pain grew. The tumour in his throat prevented him from taking nourishment; he could only hold a bit of ice in his mouth and let it melt. Toward the end he could not even receive Holy Communion. In the agony of thirst he thought he was in the midst of drouth back in Honduras. "Help me home!" he cried.

"My boys are waiting for me. There is no water in the town!"

Never did he utter a word of complaint. But he writhed and crawled about his bed like a stricken animal in dumb torment. Men turned away from that tortured, smiling figure, to hide their tears.

The pain kept him from sleep. And through the long nights he prayed quietly, or wandered off to talk about his mission. "God's will be done!" was always on his lips, or "Patience, Jesus, patience!" Those about him now prayed for his death. But death held off. He was so strong that the disease must eat him out to the last ounce of resistance before he could die.

"Tell me," he asked, "Am I dying?" And they told him, yes. "Well, that's good. It's good to go home!" And he asked his nurse to read over for him the prayers for the dying. He talked of God and of heaven as simply as might a child. He brought heaven into that chamber of suffering for those who shared it with him.

And still death forbore. Only once he said, pitifully, "I am so long a-dying!" The ashes were thickening over the little flame, but how brightly the flame shone through them. Near the end, when his throat was choked so that he could scarcely whis-

per, an old friend, a fellow priest, leaned over to catch what he was trying to say. But the faint words, with a pressure of the hand, were only a familiar teasing exclamation, "You old fraud!"

It is seven years since he died, but the details of that last long waiting for death are vivid still in the minds of those who watched with him. Never did he preach Christ to men as his smiling Christian courage preached Him then.

The last night, he asked his nurse many times, "Have we much farther to go?" Not far, she told him, and fought with her tears because she dreaded that it might still be far. It was such a night as had been a dozen before; when death hovered; and one knew not if it would come or not. In fact he seemed more at ease than he had been. Only the nurse was with him. Let her tell of the end.

"At eleven o'clock I gave him his medicine hypodermically, and arranged his pillows, and he slept fitfully. When I asked him if he would like a little piece of ice, he answered, yes; but his voice sounded differently, and he did not talk as he usually did. Still his general condition seemed better, and I was not alarmed. The Intern came in occasionally, and did not notice any change. About ten minutes before midnight, I again offered him some ice. He

nodded, but did not speak. I often recall the feeling that came over me then, as if some third person were present in the room; but I was not alarmed at all, for I knew that our dear Lord was not far away.

"I raised his head. He did not try to help me with the weight as he usually did. I saw that he was dying. I called Dr. C——, who came immediately. But his beautiful pure soul was then in the presence of Him Whom he had loved and served so well. He died without any struggle."

It was a little before midnight, Thursday, March 10, 1910. He had just completed his fortieth year.

On Saturday morning, the feast of the canonization of Saint Ignatius and Saint Francis Xavier, the rector of the University celebrated requiem Mass over the body; a low Mass, and no sermon, after the custom of the Jesuits. Then the body was taken to the cemetery at the Florissant noviciate, near the city, where Fr. Robison, his boyhood friend and comrade in the Society, read the last rites, and consigned it to the grave. The wheel had come full circle; he rested where he had begun his life as a Jesuit.

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